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COALS OF FIRE:

BEING

EXPOSITIONS OF SCRIPTURE

ON THE

DOCTRINE, EXPERIENCE, AND PRACTICE OF
CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

BY GEO. D. WATSON, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "WHITE ROBES," "HOLINESS MANUAL," "FRUIT
OF CANAAN," ETC.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE subject of Scriptural holiness has a rapidly growing literature, which, if prayerfully read, must go far to convince the Christian world of the truth of the doctrine, provided sound argument, clear Scriptural exposition, and eloquent appeal, can do it. Each writer on the subject seems to have a style and a method peculiar to himself. But whatever the style, whether argumentative, expository, or experimental, each comes to the same conclusion, that God commands us to be holy, and has made provision to save to the uttermost all that will come unto Him by Christ.

The author of this volume finds entire sanctification in many portions of the Old Testament where few people have ever thought to look for either the doctrine or the experience. But

Christians are beginning to believe that the subject is webbing all through Revelation. It is the great truth which glows upon every page of the Holy Book; the great law of all worlds and all ages,—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.”

The author has searched the Old Testament diligently for this gem of Christian doctrine and experience, and discovering it, he has brought it forth, and held it up to the gaze of Christian faith as the pearl of doctrines. After reading his expositions, the Old Testament will appear to the reader, what it is in fact, “A Treatise on Perfect Holiness.”

We are sure that “COALS OF FIRE” is not in any respect inferior to the author’s earlier works, which have found a wide sale and many admirers. But if we are able to judge correctly, this is his best effort, the fruit of mature thought and broader experience. We bespeak for it the candid perusal which its merits demand.

W. McDONALD.

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COALS OF FIRE.

CHAPTER I.

ISAIAH'S LIVE COAL.

THE Scripture to be expounded in the present chapter, is found in Isaiah vi. 1-8. The items under which all the ideas may be classified, are as follows:—

I. *The time* of Isaiah's purification. "In the year that king Uzziah died." According to our best authorities on chronology, this experience of Isaiah occurred two years after he began his prophetic ministry. It would be utterly inadmissible to suppose that he was an unconverted man when he began to prophesy, and the only rational conclusion is, that the purifying baptism which is recorded in this chapter, was subsequent to his regeneration.

He does not give us the date of his conversion, which probably occurred in his youth; but

his entire sanctification formed such an epoch in his experience and ministry, as to morally necessitate a public record of it. But this is in perfect accord with many other Scriptures.

When the Jews crossed the Red Sea, they sang a song of deliverance; but when they crossed the Jordan into the Canaan of rest, God commanded them to build a monument of stones, which should be a memorial forever of their entering into the land (Joshua iv. 7). Also, in the case of the disciples, we have no record as to the exact time when each of them were converted, but the day when they received the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit has been made memorable for all time. To this, also, agrees the experience of believers; for while it is true that nearly all Christians know the time of their conversion, and more especially if the doctrines of pardon and adoption have been distinctly preached to them, — still, to those who have experienced the witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification, there is in the latter experience such a marvelous distinctness, such a pungent consciousness of the work wrought, such a profound and complete change in all the inner nature, as to render it the most memorable epoch in the soul's history up to that time. In saying this, I do not minify in the least the most remarkable experience at conversion.

It is likely that persons who have not experienced the witness to heart purity, may disagree with these statements; but those who have received the full baptism of the Spirit, will confirm their truthfulness.

II. *Isaiah's vision.*—The vision which God gave the prophet was the means of bringing him to see his need of entire holiness. The features of this vision were such as belonged within the “second veil,” where the high priest alone could enter. Isaiah was not a priest, and hence had never had the privilege of entering into the second veil; but God revealed all the mysteries of the most holy place to him in a vision. The items of the vision are worthy of separate notice.

1. “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.” This was doubtless none other than the Lord Jesus, manifesting Himself as he had promised unto Moses in Exodus xxv., saying, “I will meet thee and commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims.” It is by clear and distinct views of God to the soul, that it apprehends its own corruption, its own dissimilarity to God, and its infinite need of holiness. The Greek motto was, “Know thyself”; but the Bible motto is, “Know God.” Alas, that so many

professed Christians should put the aphorism of man above the aphorism of God. A creature mind can only know itself and all things, truly, as it knows God. There is no true light except what comes down from Jesus to the soul. A clear vision of the person and purity of God, will enable us to discern our own inner being, and also the character of those around us.

2. "Above it stood the seraphim." The term "seraphim" is synonymous with "cherubim." The word cherub signifies "shining one"; the word seraph signifies "burning one." A common error, almost universal, is to confound these beings referred to here, with angels. There is no place in Scripture where the word angel is used interchangeably with cherubim or seraphim; neither are their *works* or *office* described as the same. Perhaps the ablest explanation of the terms cherub and seraph, is found in Mr. George Smith's "Harmony of Divine Dispensations." He argues that the seraphim refer to redeemed men fully baptized of the Holy Ghost. The proofs are, in brief, —

The cherubim on the mercy-seat was composed of the same piece of gold that formed the lid of the mercy-seat, and *upon which the blood was sprinkled*, identifying the creature with that which is redeemed.

Again, Moses was commanded to make no

image of that which was in Heaven above, or earth beneath; but if the forms of the cherubims represented angels, that would be a breaking of that law; but if they represented redeemed men under the Holy Ghost dispensation, they were prophetic images of future facts.

Again, there is nothing in the whole imagery of the temple to represent the fruit of redemption, except the cherubim.

These, with many others which cannot be here mentioned, have led me to accept of his views as being the true Scriptural idea.

3. The theme of the seraphim — a declaration of God's holiness. "And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." All true preaching of the Gospel must consist largely in proclaiming the nature, purity, and character of God. It is impossible for men to form any estimate of righteousness or holiness, of experience or practice, except it is furnished by a revelation from the character and conduct of God. The revelation of God through Jesus Christ, is our only standard of inner life and outward behavior. It is lamentable to notice what an infinite amount of stuff is palmed off on the generations as Gospel, which has to it no glowing back-ground of the holiness of God. It was this declaration and vision of the Divine purity, which caused Isaiah to perceive

the necessity of his "perfecting holiness in the fear of God"; and the same spiritual law applies to other believers as well.

4. The glory of God filling the earth. "The whole earth is full of his glory." This expression must have reference to the sanctification of God's people throughout the earth. There is a parallel passage in Numbers xiv. 21. When the Jews turned back from entering into Canaan, God declared that though that generation should die in the wilderness, yet as "truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord"; from which we learn that the glory of the Lord is identified with having His people enter upon their full privileges. So in this passage from Isaiah, the seraphim, elsewhere called the "living creatures," representing the fire-baptized heralds of salvation, intimate that when the holiness of God is proclaimed and accepted, this will fill the earth with His glory. Another thought may be gleaned from this passage, that those who are in a state of holiness, and look out upon the world from God's standpoint, see the fulfillment of God's purposes, through a different medium from those who look through the medium of the carnal mind. Isaiah at this time saw the earth filled with carnality and desolation; but these flaming ministers of grace saw the possibilities and achieve-

ments of grace in human hearts, through the glowing atmosphere of the Holy Ghost. Wherever sunlight falls upon the edges of leaves, chips, or grains of sand, there are beautiful sunbows, with all the colors of the rainbow; but our eyes are too coarse to see them. If our vision was fine enough, on any sunny day we would see the whole earth literally bespangled with the seven-fold colors of the "showery arch." The spread of holiness is the true glory of God.

5. The supernatural motion of the temple. "And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried." The margin says, "the thresholds moved." There is both a *scientific* and *spiritual* significance to this verse, both of which are intensely interesting. The scientific thought is briefly this: It is an established fact that all the particles of matter, everywhere, are constantly in a vibratory motion; just as on a larger scale the pulse of animals, the tides of ocean, and the rolling of spheres, are unceasing. Sound, itself, is only a mode of motion; different substances have a different key and rapidity of vibration, so that when certain notes are struck, all particles of matter near by, whose vibrations are in the same key with the note, will be accelerated in their motion by the striking of the note. This can be proved by a thousand illustrations.

A lamp chimney will ring at the touch of a certain key in the piano ; deaf persons can read music by placing their fingers on the instrument when being played, and by the vibrations in the wood read the tune through their fingers, etc.

If the voices of the seraphim were pitched in concert with the molecular motion of the temple, then, as a simple scientific fact, the pillars and threshold would tremble at their songs, as churches do from an organ. I have not time to trace this thought out in its vast results ; except to suggest, that the sounding of the "trump of God" may be so connected with the molecular motion of the dust of the dead, as to be a factor in the resurrection.

But this verse has a still higher signification. There is a shaking of our whole nature, in connection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul, in Hebrews xii., in drawing a contrast between Pentecost and Mount Sinai, mentions this fact of the two shakings, which must be understood as having relation to the church and soul, as well as to material nature : "Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven ; and this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." Now to prove that this refers to the soul and to experience, he goes right on to say,

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom [in the present tense] which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.” Our sinful life must be shaken by the power of conviction and regeneration, and our spiritual life must be again shaken by “the consuming fire” of sanctification, till that which “cannot be shaken” is left in unmixed stability.

6. “The house was filled with smoke.” Throughout the Scriptures, smoke is an emblem of that which proceeds out of the heart of man through his mouth. The breathings of the heart in prayer is compared to the smoke of sweet burning spices; on the other hand, the blasphemies of the ungodly are compared to the stifling stench of burning sulphur; hence we see at the dedication of the tabernacle by Moses, and of the temple by Solomon, the prayers of the people, and God’s glorious answer, were symbolized by smoke.

III. The third general feature of this Scripture, *was Isaiah’s confession*. “Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” By close examination, we find there are four items in this confession.

1. "Woe is me, for I am undone" [margin, *I am cut off*]. That is, he perceived the vast distance between the hidden and original nature within him, and the holiness of God. In explaining these words, we must remember that it is not the confession of a man living in open and actual sin, but of a true servant and child of God, and that the confession pertains to that hidden and subtle sinfulness of nature, which is a source of intense anguish to the child of God, until he finds complete deliverance. In nearly all the printed sermons and comments upon this passage, the Scriptures are grossly perverted, and Isaiah is represented as an unjustified sinner seeking justification from guilt. There is a great lack of properly dividing the Word of God, so as to distinguish between different species of character, and different degrees of grace. It is a lamentable fact, that multitudes of religious teachers recognize no form of sin except overt and actual, and hence never seem to know how to explain those passages of Scripture which deal with the great sub-spiritual facts of original evil which cleaves to the soul after regeneration, and which is to the devout soul a separate realm of woe, apart from actual guilt. One of the wisest sermons ever preached or written, is that on the "Repentance of Believers," by Mr. Wesley, in which he so minutely

describes the painful and depressing emotions of sin in the believer. That sermon is an elaborate comment on this confession of Isaiah. When a sinner apprehends the guilt of his sins, he feels an unspeakable woe; and when the enlightened believer, who has enough spirituality to see through his own heart, discovers the deep-seated malignity of his own fallen nature, and the gulf between that sinful nature and the God whom he longs to resemble, and the dishonor which this inward sin brings upon his Lord, there is a feeling of woe, different in kind from the former, but, if anything, more heart-rending and poignant, because seen in a stronger light.

2. "I am a man of unclean lips." Inward depravity does not always manifest itself alike in all persons. With Isaiah, it was probably rash, or bitter, or uncharitable speech; he may have been, like Wesley, naturally a man of cutting sarcasm,—a man whose words would wound like a saw. He certainly had a thousand provocations to use the most merciless and denunciatory terms, in which he would not likely discover the amount of self and depravity, until he saw the meek and gentle and holy temper of his Lord; but in that pure radiance he would see a mass of impurity attaching to his denunciations, which made him loathe himself in the sight of God.

Whether this were true in the case of Isaiah, or not, it has been true in thousands of instances, with God's true and earnest, yet not fully sanctified ministers. Has not every minister, as well as every child of God, many a time, discovered a vast amount of self-will, self-planning, rashness of spirit, harshness of words, subtle animosity, censoriousness of spirit, towards the sinfulness or sluggishness of our fellow-beings? almost as much gall as love, mingling with our zealous words and religious performances; laying the blame of the church's sterility on others' defects, and not on our own secret, subtle depravity? Has not the interior vision of these things, driven thousands in shame to their closets and their knees, and made them cry, "I am a man of unclean lips"? Such experiences are painful, yet nevertheless are the Gethsemane-path to the crucifixion of self, and the being baptized with all the mind that was in Christ.

3. "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He saw in the transcendant light of this vision, the true complexion of the character of the people around him. There is here a very important suggestion. Ministers are liable to go to extremes with regard to the sins of the people around them. A large class of nominal or professional preachers, have in all

ages made light of the sins of the people ; have preached smooth things to please their hearers have utterly shunned from showing the people their sins. The Universalist teaching that God is too good to punish sinners ; the Unitarian teaching that human nature is too fine and good to be punished ; the Plymouth Brother teaching that all manner of sinfulness is easily covered over by the white mantle of the so-called " finished work " ; the semi-Swedenborgian and naturalistic preachers, teaching that sin is only a sort of sour sap, which will mellow into goodness in the autumn of life ; the time-serving ritualist, who is too dainty-tongued to even read God's words respecting hell and the judgment ; and, last of all, the back-slidden Orthodox, with whom preaching has become a mere profession by which to make a living ; who goes on in a beaten track, and will not warn the people respecting their coming doom. Isaiah belonged to none of these : he saw the peoples' sins, their responsible and punishable sins.

There is another class, much smaller than the former, who go to the opposite extreme, and do nothing but denounce sinners and declaim against the imperfections of God's people. They denounce in unmeasured bitterness every branch and organization of the visible church. In public, in private, and in print, they excoriate

the ministers and servants of God. They think they must use insulting and abusive language to their hearers; they magnify the ordinary faults of good people into the most heinous sins; their speech is filled with gall and sulphur; but their eyes shed no tears "over the slain of the daughter of my people."

They fancy that the height of their piety is measured by the extent of their denunciation; they think they are foreordained to be "sharp threshing instruments, having teeth," but overlook entirely the "gentleness and meekness of Jesus."

Between these two extremes was Isaiah, the pattern of the true minister of God. He had one trait which neither of the above class exhibit: he confessed his own corruption of nature in connection with that of his people, seeing both in the same light, but unbosoming his own depravity *first*, and that of his people afterwards. A parallel example is found in Daniel ix. 21: "While I was speaking in prayer and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, etc." It is impossible for us to properly expose the sins of the people as Jesus did, *unless we are filled with the same spirit that filled Him*. To attempt to imitate the example of Christ in any given thing, without having the "same mind that was in Him," is gross machine

service, and makes havoc with the work of God.

4. "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." He attributed the light by which he saw his own defection, as coming directly from the Lord. It was not the result of natural acuteness of perception; it was not a philosophical analysis; it was not a deduction of reason; it was not the mere emotional whim of low spirits; it was not a "blue-Monday" conclusion of his temporary feelings; but it was the broad, cloudless, serious, sober, thorough revelation of all the inner facts of his nature, produced by the strongest of all causes, — his seeing the Lord of hosts. In this confession we have no account of his weeping, or his praying, but that which includes and goes beyond mere sighs and petitions; namely, an *utter and unlimited confession of the whole heart*. How few understand what is a perfect confession to God! It is, as it were, the turning of the soul inside out, without any apology or excuse for its contents. So much is involved in complete confession, that upon it God conditions both pardon for all actual sins, and cleansing from all unrighteousness (1 John i. 9).

IV. *Isaiah's complete sanctification*. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a

live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." The items in these verses needing special notice, are: —

1. The agency of the seraphim. He did not sanctify Isaiah, neither did he create the sanctifying agent; but in harmony with the idea that the seraphim represent the office of the apostles or evangelists, fully anointed for work under the Spirit's dispensation, acting as God's agent in first proclaiming the holiness of God, and then conveying to the earnest seeker those fire-charged and spirit-illuminated promises of truth, through which we are sanctified. If we carefully collect all the passages referring to the cherubim, the seraphim, or the living creatures, and examine their activities, we find them to correspond with the zeal and functions of the apostles and evangelists as exhibited in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. Having a *live coal* in his hand. This live coal is the word, the truth, the promise of God, set on fire of the Holy Ghost. The mere written word of Scripture, apart from the accompaniment of the Holy Ghost, is like anthracite coal, lying dark and chill in the mine; but when the Scripture is applied to the heart

by the personal agency of the Spirit of God, it is like the same anthracite coal, glowing white with heat in the furnace.

The written word, in and of itself, does not save us; the mere "letter killeth"; the spirit gives both heat and light to the written word. Whole chapters of Scripture may be committed to memory without penetrating the heart; but if only one brief verse is laid on the heart, hot with the Holy Ghost's presence in it, there will be a supernatural shock, sufficient to make the dead leap into life, and the leprosy of hidden sin vanish into nonentity. When the coal from the mines is brought out and set on fire, it drives the machinery of the world; and when the written word is preached and applied by the burning and luminous touch of the Spirit, it impels the souls of Christendom along paths of holy conquest. He took the live coal *from the altar*, the altar where the sacrifice had been offered; the altar where the blood flowed, and the sacrifice was burned. What can this mean but that all Scripture is not only from Him who is the Word of God, but from Him crucified? The live coals of Divine promise which God's baptized heralds extend to the people, cannot be gathered from the frozen regions of science or poesy, but must be taken from the altar-cross, baptized with His blood, glowing

with that sacrificial flame. If the word of God we handle is not taken hot from that altar, it will never convert sinners or sanctify believers.

3. And "he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips." The sanctifying remedy is applied to the diseased spot. Isaiah spoke of unclean lips, and hence to the lips the fire must needs be applied. God's sanctifying grace is as various in its virtue as are the defections and needs of the soul; each one needs a touch of fire at the spot of his besetting sin.

4. "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." It does not say thine iniquities or thy sins, as would have been the case had he been an unjustified transgressor; for "although his actual sins had been as scarlet, they had been made as white as snow" (chap. i. 18).

That which was cleansed away now was not a something in the plural number, but a unit principle of evil, latent within him. In all this Scripture there is no intimation of Isaiah being an actual sinner. It is not a voice of pardon, but of purification.

"Thine iniquity." The word iniquity means inequality, up and down. There is in every believer an up-and-down experience in his faith, his peace, and obedience; an unevenness, an inequality in his inner life, which is never brought

into a straight, even stream of faith, and hope, and love, till the subtle crookedness is taken away, and the inward sin purged.

V. *The results of the sanctifying touch.* "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me." Here are two or three marvellous effects specified, as the direct fruit of the baptism of fire.

1. He *heard the voice of the Lord.* Up to this time there is no account in the vision of his hearing the Divine voice, but only hearing the voice of His flaming messengers. According to a multitude of Scriptures, there are five spiritual senses, as really as the five physical ones; but these spiritual senses are folded, blunted, impaired, by the existence of inbred sin.

Regeneration restores life to the spiritual senses, but they are not fully opened and clarified for full exercise till all the carnal mind is extirpated, and the inner man filled with the Holy Ghost. There is a spiritual ear in the heart, and when the wax of depravity is removed under the full baptism of the Spirit, how acute is its hearing! Then it is true in a high sense, "My sheep hear my voice." When Isaiah's spiritual hearing was perfectly healed,

he could catch the gentle voice of his God, even though that voice came through the sound of singing seraphim and shouting cherubim, with a swiftness and distinctness of accent never heard before. It is not the loudness of the voice, but the affinity which the ear has for it, which renders it heard with ease. A fully-sanctified soul will have its spiritual senses opened, and energized to hear, see, touch, taste, and smell, spiritual facts, spiritual truths, spiritual sensations, utterly unknown before; and almost utterly discredited by those who are yet partly carnal. As St. Paul tells us, "strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by a habit of perfection, have their spiritual senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews v. 14, *margin*). How many go on guessing at the Divine voice, often confounding it with self or Satan, when, if the wax were purged from their spiritual ears, they might catch the articulations of the Holy One, and distinguish it in storm or calm, from the mingled sounds of earth.

2. His soul discovered the blessed Trinity. "Who will go for Us?" This is the only verse in this chapter where God is spoken of in the plural. Here we discover that He who is One, is also more than one. Jesus told the disciples that when they received the abiding Comforter,

they should know the Trinity, not as a dogma, but as an inward revelation to the heart. "The Spirit of Truth shall be in you, and ye shall know that I am in my Father" (John xiv. 17-20).

What ineffable experiences of the revelation of the Trinity to the hearts of perfect believers might be collected from the history of the saints! Isaiah's discovery of the voice as coming from a plural God-head, is a clear intimation that he discerned the sacred personalities and saving offices of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. "Then said I, here am I: send me." Prompt, willing, unreserved, individual, glad and unquestioning response to the Divine will. This is the fruit of the sanctifying baptism. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the service of the partially and fully sanctified Christian, but there is in that of the former a reserve, a questioning, a hesitation, an element of coercion, or forcing one's self along, a waiting for others, which does not characterize the believer when filled with the Holy Spirit.

There is a celestial ring in the very words of Isaiah, a boldness, an individuality, an aggressiveness of spirit in the "here am I: send me," which proves that the touch of the live coal had gone all through his members, melting his heart, opening his senses, clarifying his perceptions,

purifying his nature, thrilling his will, sweetening his temper, enrapturing his love, and bringing him in such blessed union with God as to clothe him with light and fire, and put such wings to his obedience as to virtually transform him into a seraph, whose mission it should evermore be to go through time and eternity singing **Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.**

CHAPTER II.

SACRIFICE AND PRAYER; OR, THE BRAZEN AND GOLDEN ALTARS.

LET us, in this chapter, examine a cluster of Scripture passages showing the relation between the spirit of sacrifice and the spirit of prayer.

We can find a key text in Ps. 1. 5. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Here we have the statement of a great spiritual law, of which we can find multitudes of illustrations in the Word of God and the experience of saints. Here is one of God's definitions of a saint: those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. A covenant is a bargain, an agreement between two parties with fixed conditions and pledges of fidelity. But in God's dealings with man, all covenants are accompanied by sacrifice, as a test and guarantee of fidelity, or basis of agreement. God enters into a covenant with us by the sacrifice of His Son, and we enter into covenant and agreement with Him by the sacrifice of ourselves.

In order to bring this truth with such poignancy upon our hearts as to deepen our spiritual fervor, let us array some illustrations from Scripture before us.

The two altars of the tabernacle were an embodiment of this. The altar of brass was for sacrifice; and the altar of gold was for prayer.

In Ex. xxvii. 1-8, we have a full description of the brazen altar, upon which the sacrificial animals were to be offered and burned; then in Ex. xxx. 1-10, we have an elaborate account of the golden altar of incense where the priest should stand and "burn sweet incense" and offer prayer, after having burnt the sacrifice. The order of service, however, was *not* the incense first, but the sacrifice first, then the prayer, of which incense was the type. First the brass, then the gold; first the suffering, then the sweet odors. This is the old and secret combination for unlocking the Divine safe. In the experience of Abraham, as recorded in Gen. xv. 9-18, which occurred four hundred years previous to the building of the tabernacle, we see a vivid example of the truth of the two altars; first the offering the sacrifice, then the smoking furnace, corresponding to the incense, after which it is stated, "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram." In this example, it is still further worthy of notice, that the sacrifice by

which Abraham entered into this great covenant, was not only outward and typical, but inward and real, as well; for after offering the animals and birds, "lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon him," and he saw through the black tunnel of four hundred years of affliction for his children, so that in yielding up to God his sympathies in these future sorrows, he underwent a profound interior crucifixion, which was the condition upon which God linked the everlasting covenant.

Moses, in pronouncing the blessing on the priestly tribe, says, "They shall teach Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifices upon thine altar" (Deut. xxxiii. 10). Here we have a poetical climax, which accounts for the reversing the order of terms. Both in the order of history and experience, first comes the sacrifice, then the incense, then the teaching.

In 1 Kings viii. 5-11, we find another illustration of the intimate relation subsisting between sacrifice and answered prayer; and also between the prodigality of the one and the splendor of the other; for the "sacrificing of sheep and oxen that could not be told or numbered for multitude," was followed by the excessive response, "that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord

had filled the house." This overwhelming cloud was the outward sign of the mighty prayer of the king and its answer; for we must remember that in Scripture, prayer and its answer are so blended into one as not to demand separate symbols. Prayer is the explosion of the inward state of the heart, the molten condition of the inner spirit poured forth in the volcanic lava of words, sighs and tears. Our heavenly Father, seeing the volcanic formation of prayer within us, in infinite love and precision often prepares the answer and dispatches it on the way to meet us, even before the eruption of the prayer in words. "It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

Hence David says, as soon as he determined to confess his sins, God forgave him (Ps. xxxii. 5); and the angel told Daniel that at the "beginning of his prayer," the commandment of answer went forth. Hence in this class of texts we are now examining, the "smoke," the "incense cloud," is sometimes typical of the prayer, and again of the "glory of the Lord," that is, the answer of the prayer; so swiftly related are the cravings of the suppliant heart and the responsiveness of the "God of all grace."

But to resume the main thought of this reading, the antecedence of sacrifice to prayer, the

case of Elijah, in 1 Kings xviii. 33-39, is familiar. One more illustration from the Old Testament, and a very practical one, is found in Ps. xl. 6-11. David discovered that it was not the sacrifice of sheep and oxen that pleased God, but the generous, loving sacrifice of *his will*; and, after making this offering, he pours out his prayer in verse 11.

The intercessory prayers of our Saviour are founded upon His sacrificial death; and when He prayed "Father, forgive them," the river of sacrificial blood He was then shedding, floated His prayer with acceptance to the Father.

We must never fail to distinguish that, while the death of Jesus is the fountain of merit for His intercessions and our prayers (Heb. ix. 14, 15), on the other hand, the sacrifices we yield to God do not contain any saving merit, but simply put us into such harmony with the will of God, that the merit of Christ's sacrifice is available for all our needs. We must sacrifice all sins and sinful pleasures, in order that our prayer for pardon may be answered; then, as believers, we must sacrifice that precious thing — *self* and *self-will* — in order that our prayers for heart purity may be accepted; and after we are fully sanctified, in the progress of the spiritual life, and in securing answers to our manifold prayers, this principle of sacrifice is amplified

and spread abroad over numberless details of experience, so that we are often re-tested at the brazen altar, and find many occasions to offer up our wills, our affections, our hopes, our labors, ourselves in some shape to God, which will prove the genuineness and continuity of our entire consecration. In confirmation of these sentiments, let us notice some passages from the New Testament.

“If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift ” (Matt. v. 23-24). From this text, we see that the offering of the outward ceremonial gift is so inferior to the true crucifixion of spirit, it is to be suspended, and the act of worship or prayer delayed till we have gone to our brother and humbled ourselves, and made a sacrifice of our time and self-esteem, and even of our own legal rights, it may be ; and then our act of worship will be instantly accepted as a sweet odor. We learn the relation of the two altars, or sacrifice and accepted prayer, in those words of our Lord, “This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting” (Mark ix. 29). The brazen altar is couched under the term of fasting, which, in the language of Isaiah, “makes our voice or prayer to be heard on high,” to the casting out of demons.

When the hundred and twenty were praying and waiting for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, where was the feature of sacrifices in connection with their praying? Many items from their experience might be collated to sustain the teaching of this chapter, but the most practical one for us is suggested by these words, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with *one accord* in one place" (Acts ii. 1). This oneness of accord not only means they had agreed to meet in the same place, but they had come, through many individual surrenders, to an inner heart and mind accordancy respecting the promise. They could not reach oneness of accord till each had laid down his private opinion, private criticism, personal theological *ipsi dixit*, secret jealousies, personal ambitions, individual motives and ends; and each had given up the spirit of dictation to others, till each utterly yielded to One Will; and all had sunk to perfect simplicity and transparency of motive and purpose; then, and not till then, "suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Oh, what tremendous, multiform, personal and delicate sacrifices of heart, mind and will, are enveloped under *oneness of accord*?

It would cost any ordinary congregation of worshippers manifold and excruciating deaths of self in various points, to reach this unselfish

simplicity and oneness of motive. Hence thousands of congregations verbally pray for the Holy Spirit, but on how many does He fall? We might slightly change the words of the great poet, and say:—

“ Our prayers fly up, our sacrifice is below,
Prayers without sacrifice cannot to heaven go.”

If our prayers are answered with Pentecostal power, we must pay Pentecostal prices.

“ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost ” (Acts iv. 31); but the secret magazine which supplied the moral dynamite for this prayer-meeting is found in the utter self-sacrifice recorded in verse 19, “ Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.”

Another very interesting illustration is found in the experience of Peter (Acts. x. 9.–16).

He went up on the housetop to pray, but before that prayer and the service of that day could be accepted, he must make the sacrifice of entirely relinquishing his Jewish and narrow-minded prejudices against the Gentiles.

Do not forget that previous to this, Peter was fully sanctified on the day of Pentecost, and at this time there is no proof of sin in his heart;

but there was a previous bigoted education, a strong predilection for old opinions, a limited view of Gospel purposes, which hindered his widest fruitfulness. But in evidence that his heart was full of purity and obedience, as soon as he was convinced from God, he instantly sacrificed his former opinions, and followed the Spirit.

This lesson from Peter is often repeated in some form in the experience of holy people.

Perhaps the most glowing sketch we can find of the union between the spirit of sacrifice and victorious prayer, is that furnished in the sixth and seventh chapters of Revelation.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? — REV. vi. 9-10.

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. — REV. viii. 3-5.

In these verses we see first the uttermost sacrifice of actual martyrdom, then such a volume of intercessions and prayers of these saints from the golden altar as to form a smoke of fragrance unto God, and then when the response of these mighty prayers fell on the earth, the stupendous effects are suggested by "voices, and thundrings, and lightnings and an earthquake."

Heartquake sacrifices upon the brazen altar, bring earthquake responses from the golden altar.

The fixed spiritual law of grace running through these texts, and illustrated by these examples, furnishes us with the key to prevailing prayers, and reveals the cause why so many who seem to earnestly seek, fail to find pardon or heart purity. Let us not shun the brazen altar, in too great a hurry to get to the golden.

The only way to the upper-room tongues of flame, is by the way of the bleeding Cross.

"The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit." Every prayer issuing from a contrite and obedient heart, is a sweet perfume to God. One of the last sacrifices to be offered in connection with prayer, is to abandon our anxiety as to the answer of the prayer; for peaceful, quiet waiting, is itself a sweet sacrifice.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOVE SLAVE.

Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:

Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. — EXODUS xxi. 1-6.

WE shall get a very clear insight into the spiritual meaning of sundry laws and customs which God prescribed to his Jewish people, if we carry along with us the recollection that God was not only dealing with the outward well-being of that people, but he had in his mind as well the ulterior and spiritual benefit of his people in all subsequent ages. God's prescriptions to them

for the outer life, were patterns of his prescriptions to us for the inner spiritual life; as the bark takes the shape of the tree upon which it grows, so the outward laws for the Jews were so arranged as to take the shape of spiritual things. If we carefully analyze this portion of Jewish domestic life, we find it foreshadows and illustrates, with remarkable clearness and beauty, all the leading features of a Christian's relation to Jesus. The points in it most suggestive to my mind, are the following:—

I. *Sold for debt.* “If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve.”

The reason why a Hebrew might sell himself, is explained in Leviticus xxv. 39–40. “If thy brother be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, and he shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee.” Hence the reason for the sale was debt; as for example, if a young man were in debt, and unable to pay, he might sell himself to a rich relative, who would assume all his liabilities, and thus escape the shame and imprisonment which otherwise might result from his poverty.

This is the true picture of the condition of every penitent sinner. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Having committed sin, we are

utterly unable to meet the claims of the moral law upon us, and unable to render God the service due him. We are thereby thrown into irretrievable debt and bankruptcy, in our moral nature.

But the ten commandments still pursue us with their claims, accompanied by severe and eternal penalties. The law is God's police agent to arrest the soul, and to ultimately lock it up in the penitentiary of everlasting woe. Every guilty, sinning soul, on earth, is at this hour under God's law, and on the way to an eternal jail. As soon as the soul is awakened to its true condition, and in utter self-despair cries out for help, it is immediately met by its great kinsman, Jesus; "who was born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." If the debt-burdened sinner will enter into an agreement with Christ; will turn over to Christ all the liabilities of his immortal nature; and all the possibilities of his future service, and thus sell himself to his Kinsman, Jesus will meet all the claims and penalties against that sinner, release him from fetters and imprisonment, and bring the thus pardoned sinner into his own house to serve him.

II. *The probation of service.* "Six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out

free for nothing;" or else, at the end of six years, he might enter into a still stronger covenant with his master for an unlimited service. (See Deut. xv. 16.) In this we find a principle which is eminently true in Christian experience.

After the convert has served Christ for a longer or shorter period, he is brought to a point, where either by the convictions of the Spirit, or by the needs of his own experience, he is compelled to choose between being a mere ordinary Christian, with a meager experience, or entering into a perfect sacrifice of himself to God, and follow the Spirit in the deep things of Christ. Just as every sinner in the world is at some time brought to a point where he practically decides the question of eternal life or death, so every Christian is brought to a point where he inevitably chooses between a present and full sanctification, or practically putting it off till death. It does not always take this definite shape to the mind, but it practically amounts to this. Mr. Wesley in his sermon on "*The more excellent way*," which was written in his old age, says, "From long experience and observation I am inclined to think that whoever is justified, has then the choice of walking in the higher or lower path. I believe the Holy Spirit at that time sets before him the more excellent way and incites him to walk therein, to choose the narrow-

est path in the narrow way ; to aspire after the heights and depths of holiness—after the entire image of God. But if he does not accept this offer, he insensibly declines into the lower order of Christians. He still goes on, in what may be called a good way, serving God in a degree, and finds mercy in the close of life, through the blood of the covenant.”

This striking passage of Mr. Wesley, was the fruit of a long and wide experience in soul saving and building up of the saints ; and is a fine comment on the scripture before us, as to the choice of a Hebrew servant, whether he should go out to the ordinary life of a Jewish citizen and laborer, or by binding himself for life to his rich relative, enjoy emoluments and blessings which he could never acquire by himself. It often happens, when the doctrine of entire sanctification is first distinctly preached in a community, that church members think the subject is merely optional with them, and that they can reject it, and still go on getting refreshings of grace as in former times, when holiness was not definitely set before them. But such is never the case. They have been serving Christ for a longer or shorter period, and, it may be, following Him up to their measure of light, but now their “year of jubilee has come,” the privileges and claims of Christian perfection are distinctly

sounded in their ears, and it is *impossible to avoid the issue*, they have come to a fork in the road, and must inevitably choose between a higher and a lower type of piety, the results of which choice we will see further on.

III. *Profit and loss of spiritual gifts and graces.* "If he came in by himself he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him; if his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons, or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself." What a sad, solemn lesson is suggested by these last words; and yet they are as inevitably true in spiritual things to-day, as they were true in the domestic life of the Jews.

Put before your mind's eye this picture: a poverty-stricken man, selling himself to serve six years; during his servitude his master gives him a wife, builds him a cottage in a vineyard; as the years pass on, children are born unto him; vines and shrubbery and flowers grow about his cottage; comforts multiply around him, and one would think he was fairly settled for life.

But the year of jubilee arrives; momentous questions are to be settled; he is compelled either to increase or diminish his blessings; he must either get closer to, or further away from

his master ; he must settle the question of profit and loss. If he decides to go out from his master, he must lose all the gifts and emoluments which he has acquired from his master, except simply that he goes out free from debt. If on the other hand he decides to enter into still deeper covenant with his master, he can retain all his blessings, with a prospect of still greater favors being bestowed upon him. How strikingly and minutely do these facts illustrate the condition of believers with reference to spiritual gifts and graces ! A poor sinner burdened with the debt of death penalty, flies to Christ and is "justified freely by his death." Jesus not only forgives his debt, but receives him into the royal family, and bestows upon him manifold gifts and graces according to his measure. There are bestowed upon him the graces of the Holy Spirit, various gifts for usefulness, and many emoluments accruing from membership in his church. And in the years of his first love to his Master, he exercises himself in prayer, song, exhortation, testimony, benevolence, Christian visitation, spiritual reading, or it may be in preaching, revival work, writing books or tracts, until he is quite well-to-do in his spiritual estate. But sooner or later God brings around to his soul the year of jubilee. He may not comprehend the magnitude of the crisis, but an epoch is being approached in his career.

In some way he must face the question of entire sanctification. It may be some great calamity comes upon him, loss of wealth, or loss of friends, or loss of health, or strange and extreme temptations; or it may be during a revival, or at some camp-meeting, or through reading a book; in some form or other, the question of complete devotion to God, of entire crucifixion of self, is brought right before him. He cannot shun the issue, he can no longer live along on the same plane he has been living; he is *absolutely compelled* to get closer to Christ or further away, to take higher or lower ground in religion. Perhaps millions come to this jubilee crisis in their spiritual life without comprehending what it involves, without estimating the *profit* and *loss* of their decision.

If they neglect the experience of entire holiness, or pass it lightly by, or think they can serve God without making a specialty of holiness, they inevitably begin to lose from that day; their spiritual gifts begin to fade away, their graces begin to dry up, they may escape the death penalty, but they are reduced to great poverty in spiritual things.

This truth has a thousand living comments all around us. What multitudes of ministers, that were full of gifts and zeal, and begot many souls in the Gospel, have had to face the ques-

tion of entire sanctification, and thought they could get along without it; have from that very time gone into moral poverty, both in their own experience and in their labors; preaching the same old sermons without their early fire; the fervor has left their prayers, the pathos has left their voice, the light has left their religious perceptions, they have become dull and uninteresting; many of them laid on ecclesiastical shelves; the gifts have retired to the hand that gave them.

How many family altars have been silenced, how many voices have ceased to sing, how many who once testified in social meetings testify no longer, how many active and soul-saving Christians have become barren; all the result of refusing to choose a closer walk with God. Like the Jewish servant, they thought they could take their interests largely into their own hand; thought if they could escape the jail of hell, they could get along well enough without entering into the *perpetual slavery* of holy love, without submitting to the "ear marks" of full sanctification.

IV. *Choosing the more excellent way.* "If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, my children, I will not go out free." Here we see the character of him, who prefers to take higher ground in his devotion, to enter

into still deeper servitude; who appreciates the gifts of his master, and prefers his master's provision for him, to his own self management.

We have here a fine illustration of the two forms of love, so often dwelt upon in mental and moral science; namely, the *love of gratitude*, and the *love of personal excellence*.

We may suppose that when the poor young man sold himself to the rich neighbor, it was not personal regard for the neighbor, but personal protection from punishment, which led to the act; then when his master cancelled his debts, and showered many blessings upon him, there would spring up the love of gratitude to his master; but as he became more thoroughly acquainted with the amiable character of his master, his attachment to him would become a love of his excellence; so that apart from the mere gifts, he would love the man for his own sake. In like manner it is self-preservation from "the wrath to come" that drives the awakened sinner to his Saviour, and when Christ blots out his transgressions, and pours many favors upon his soul, there springs up the love of gratitude. "We love him because he first loved us," but when the believer becomes thoroughly acquainted with Jesus as a person, and understands His inner life, His love to Christ will become a deep spiritual passion, a supreme attachment to His person, "he is one all together lovely."

It is this latter form of love, which is the secret spring of unlimited sacrifice, devotion and service; both in social and religious matters, the love of person is far stronger than the love of gratitude; the love of personal attachment will lead to a thousand-fold more sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, than any other form of love. The character now before us, chooses to have his ear bored, to enter into a life-long servitude, to abandon his labors to the mere will of another; because "he loves his master." It is true, he loves his wife, and his children, and he loves his master because of his gifts; but over and above all this, he is attached to his master as a brother, he honors his character, he can repose in his plans, he can trust in his care, he never wants to get any farther away from him. His affection for his master is not ambiguous, it is not silent, but he plainly says, "I love my master." This is the secret spring of those who take the highest ground of devotion to Jesus: they long for purity, they cannot brook anything that separates them from Christ. Not because they are afraid of going to hell, not because they want merely to retain the gifts of Christ, but their acquaintance with Him has made them willing to *do* anything, to *be* anything and to *suffer* anything, that they might be united with Him forever. What a world of suggestion is in "I will not go out free"!

When his master took him, he had nothing but debt, he was always a poor manager of his own affairs; his master takes infinitely better care of him than he did of himself.

Ah, if Christians could only see this in their relation to Jesus! The great mass of believers think if Jesus will only save them from hell, they think they can manage their other affairs themselves. They seek their own honor, or wealth; they plan to get into certain offices, or into certain situations; they manage their own petty interests, and think way ahead and lay petty schemes for themselves, or their friends; they cannot wait for the slow footsteps of God's will, they are afraid God would not feather their nest thick enough; they think they might be left behind; and so they go out free, trusting God on general principles, but trusting themselves as to the details. But they land in spiritual bankruptcy.

Ah, blessed is the soul that will not dare trust itself, that will not dare "go out free" upon its own plans, but abandons itself, in every general and in every particular, to the supervision of its Master; and will dare receive only what He gives; that identifies its interest at every point and forever, with the will of Christ; that prefers the absolute and unending slavery of love, to the apparent freedom of legality.

V. *The covenant of love service.* "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever."

This verse involves the act of perfect self-sacrifice to our Master's will, and also His act of destroying all remaining disloyalty in our nature. We find in it the following suggestive items.

1. *The transaction was to have the sanction of the law.* "His master shall bring him unto the judges." The judges were to settle all matters of law and equity between man and man. (See Exodus xxii. 8-9.) The judges took no part in boring the servant's ear, but simply were witnesses of the transaction. In like manner the law has no power to regenerate or purify the human heart, but by putting us under conviction for pardon or purity, it is a school-master to lead us to Christ. We are not saved by the law, but Jesus saves us in harmony with the law; and our salvation is at every step sanctioned by the law. "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the

law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Romans viii. 3-4, *margin*).

Hence in our full sanctification, we do not, as the imputed holiness men teach, "make void the law through faith; God forbid, yea, we establish the law." The law is established and fulfilled in us, when we have perfect love to God and man out of a pure heart.

2. *The most perfect identification of the servant with the master's interests.* His ear was to be pinned to the door or door-posts of the master's house. He would thereby be pledged to protect the master's property, to guard the interests of his family, to be identified with the master's estate, and to forego all private and personal interests in anybody else's house or estate. This is the spirit which must fill the believer, when he passes himself over to an unlimited and unquestioning conformity to Christ. It is a willingness to be nailed to His cross, to be incorporated with the exclusive interests of His throne, to forego all other masters and all other service, in whole and in part, in act and in spirit.

A fine comment on this scripture is found in the experience of David, recorded in Psalms xl. 6-8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened . . . Theu

said I, Lo, I come : in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." This is a direct reference to the scripture under consideration. The word *opened* here is in Hebrew *digged* or *bored*. David discovered that the sacrifice which God wanted, was the unlimited sacrifice of his will, and declares that he had made this perfect sacrifice to God, by having the Lord *dig* or *bore* his ears, which proves that the lesson under consideration was designed to foreshadow the believer's complete devotion to his Master.

3. *The opening of the organ of hearing to readily understand the master's commands.* This we have seen illustrated in the experience of Isaiah. "For thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast opened the ear of thy servant" (2 Sam. vii. 27). Solomon describes the blessedness of the man whose ear has been bored with reference to his readiness and acuteness of hearing the divine commands, saying, "Hear instruction and be wise and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors" (Prov. viii. 33-34). Here is the picture of the ready, docile, and unquestioning service of the servant, whose ear has been bored. If we want to find the opposite extreme of this, we have simply to take a quotation from Stephen's fiery sermon to

the backslidden Jews: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost" (Acts vii. 51).

Notice how prompt obedience is connected with the boring of the ear, and an inability to hear the Holy Ghost is connected with uncircumcised or unbored ears. How sadly true this is to-day!

Many who would not enter into this entire crucifixion, who would not consent to wear the mark of entire sanctification, like the stubborn and backslidden members of the Jewish church, do always resist the Holy Ghost; they resist holy people, holy testimony, all efforts to promote holiness; but this resistance to all holy things, is because they resist the Holy Ghost, and will listen to almost any spirit except the Holy Spirit.

How infinitely blessed is that servant who with transpierced ears, quietly, patiently listens at the door-posts of his Saviour's palace, to catch every whispered command!

4. *"And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever."*

Here are the two supreme acts; one, that of the master, the other that of the servant. It is the master's hand and his alone that applies the stroke of crucifixion. Not the judges, not his loved ones, not his own virtuous works, not any

law of development or growth, but the short, sudden stroke, of the loving Master's hand. On the part of the servant, his service, his devotion, is pushed out into an unlimited measure, by having that tremendous "*forever*" thrown into it.

From this time on, all partial measures, all questionings of authority, all mental reservations as to the extent of sacrifice, all spirit of human policy, is forever left behind.

He launches upon a boundless sea of service, knowing not the details of the demands to be made upon him; but trusting unreservedly to the care of his master, agrees to serve him without stint or measure, without specified pay or honor, through thick or thin, through time and through eternity. Such a Christian sells himself to his Saviour for love, serves him from love, asks no pay but love, keeps no account of his labors of love.

These are the servants of God that transform the nations with their self-sacrificing toils, and ask no higher honor in earth or heaven than that of wearing the mark of crucifixion which their Master has fixed upon them.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOUR-FOLD RIVER.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden: and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havillah, where there is gold;

And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. — GEN. ii. 8-15.

DOUBTLESS God arranged the Garden of Eden and the external world as a shadow and emblem of the inner soul-world. If man had not fallen, he would have beheld in the objects of material nature, as in a lovely mirror, the reflection of some distinct truth corresponding to some fact

in his own spirit. A river is a frequent type of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus puts this type in the plural, and says in John vii. 38, 39, that out of the believer shall flow *rivers* of living water; but this He spake with reference to the gift of the Spirit.

The thoughts of God are the same in all ages; and, if He saw the baptism of the Spirit when in the flesh, under the emblem of rivers flowing out of the soul, then that is the same emblem under which He saw it at the creation of the world.

The Garden of Eden in which Adam walked, had its higher counterpart in the heart of Adam, which was the spiritual garden in which the Lord himself walked. The river that flowed through Eden, and branched off into four streams, had its spiritual counterpart in the gift of the Spirit, abiding in the heart, and flowing out from thence, as Jesus says, like rivers of water. If we compare the word in Genesis ii. 10-14, with John vii. 38, 39, we may gather some interesting suggestions.

1. *The locality* of the river in the garden — that is, in the heart of the sinless pair, or in the heart of the perfect believer — proved by such passages as these: "Thou shalt be like a watered garden;" "Their souls shall be like a watered garden;" "Out of your inmost souls shall flow

rivers of water ;” “ The earnest or gift of the Spirit in our hearts.”

2. *The one river with its four streams*, corresponding to the one full, personal, abiding gift of the Holy Spirit to the purified believer, with His manifold outstreaming manifestations through experience, work and influence. Jesus speaks of only one gift of the Spirit, but describes His manifestations as outflowing rivers ; and Paul delineates the diversities of operation from the same baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4-13).

3. *The significance of the four streams*. Not only do various passages show that the river in Eden is a type of the abiding Comforter, but, singular enough, the names of the four branch rivers have a striking correspondence in advanced religious experience.

The first is *Pison*, which means *overflowing*, expansion, covering over, etc. Heart-cleansing is by naked faith, and often is received in great emptiness of feeling, but when the baptism of the Spirit comes to fill the cleansed heart, the first outflowing form of feeling is that of *Pison* — an overflowing. The soul, like dry ground, seems to drink itself so full of rain as to overflow itself, and these two ideas of “ drinking and overflowing ” are those mentioned by Christ in John vii. 35-38. The full baptism of the Spirit

produces in its first sensations such an *expansiveness*; the cleansing power seems to have such an ample sweep to it, the whole nature has a sensation of being deluged; the banks of the soul expand from a narrow creek to an inland sea. It *sees* and *feels*,

“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy
Like the wideness of the sea.”

The name of the second river was Gihon, which signifies *bursting out—breaking forth*—as the bursting forth of pent-up waters, or breaking forth of fire into flame. When this thought of Gihon is applied to the soul, it implies an intense disposition to utter itself, to pour forth the hot contents of the heart in expressions of praise, testimony, exhortation, etc. *Pison* is the gentle overflow of the river banks, but *Gihon* is when the waters, gathering volume, pour through narrow passes, cutting a wider and deeper channel. If the first sensation of perfect love is that of a melting, calm, overflow, the next form of experience will likely be a bursting forth of new testimony. “They spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The tide of salvation in the heart must needs cut a new channel of expression for itself.

The third river was *Hiddekel*, which means *active, vehement*, and fitly represents the push and

energy, the intense zeal that is developed soon after receiving the baptism of the Spirit. It is common for souls at this stage of experience to feel a nervous, restless *go*, pushing outward, almost a frenzy of zeal to rush out in evangelistic fields and turn the world upside down. This is the dangerous passage in the sanctified life. It is in this Hiddekel phase of experience that some are apt to rush out in evangelism before fitted for it, or against Providence, or break loose from church restraints into come-outism, or break away from plain old truth into all sorts of new theologies.

This is the hot, boiling, midsummer, dog-star period of religious life, in which it is easy to make or blast a fine crop of grain. The best, when perverted, becomes worst. Blessed are they that can run the hot torrent of Hiddekel zeal, without sinking on a snag or stranding on a bar!

The fourth river was named *Euphrates*, which literally signifies "*His sweet waters.*" This is the mild, sweet, September season of grace-growing. This corresponds with the seraphic fourth gospel of St. John, and with the full, outflowing tide of the thirteenth of first Corinthians. It is this Euphrates form of experience which saturates the whole being with the mild, quiet, sweet spirit of Jesus, described by

Paul in Phil. i. 9-11. Not only perfect love, but the sweetness of perfect love, abounding more and more, till reason and knowledge and judgment and zeal are covered with love, ripening the soul in all the fruits of righteousness.

This is the river of the Spirit, and these are the main streams of full-salvation experiences.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAPTIVE BRIDE.

When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife;

Then thou shalt bring her home to thy house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;

And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that, thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.
—DEUT. xxi. 10-13.

SPIRITUAL facts are never fashioned to suit the forms of their earthly shadows, but just the opposite: the shadow partakes of the form of the substance. Paul speaks of "earthly patterns of things in heaven." God made man in His own image and likeness, "in the form of his shadow." Over and over again, Jesus is set forth in Scripture as the espoused Bridegroom of the saved soul. From the heavenly reality, God projected the shadow of this truth into the

domestic life of His ancient people ; “for what things happened unto them aforetime was written for our instruction.” This glittering gem of Scripture will serve as a centre around which all the kindred portions of truth may be crystallized ; but let us remember, we are not dealing in fanciful and sentimental poetry, but with lofty, sober spiritual realities ; for as the passing shadow of an eagle is a hint to look up at the reality, so these verses will help us to look aloft for relationships and experiences, spiritual and eternal. There are seven steps in this history.

1. *The capture.* “When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive.” This was the formulation of that sentiment which in the days of chivalry was coined into a motto, “The brave deserve the fair.” Jesus is to capture His bride from the ranks of His foes. How often along the line of Jewish history do we see this truth illustrated ; the Hebrew bridegroom capturing his wife from the outside Gentiles and heathen. Joseph and Solomon married Egyptian wives ; a prince of Judah wedded the heathen captive Rahab ; and the noble Boaz married the Gentile Ruth. Ever and anon the hand of Providence was stretched out ; sometimes in war, sometimes in famine, to snatch a captive woman from the

poor, despised, wicked heathen, to be forever incorporated with the church and to be a "mother in Israel." This is the flitting shadow upon the surface of time, pointing to loftier realities in eternity. The Lord Jesus does not select His bride from the glittering circles of unfallen worlds, but from the dark, polluted race of earth, from His stubborn and unreasonable enemies. Armed with the implements of sacrifice, with no weapons except the blood from His veins and the words from His mouth, He invades our sin-loving and God-hating race, which, like a Jericho, crumbles at the touch of His cross, and from its dismantled pride and tottering iniquities, he gathers the trembling, penitent, Rahab souls, and leads them into the captivity of grace.

2. *The Bridegroom's choice.* "And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife." It is not the atonement of Jesus that makes God love us, but just the opposite. It was His love for us, "His desire unto us," which was the *producing cause* of the plan of salvation. The gallant warrior in the above Scripture did not fall in love with the woman after she had been domesticated and decorated in a Jewish home, but right on the bloody battlefield, amid scenes of desolation, the burning of houses, the haggard and wailing condition of the

captives. The terror in the face, and the tears from the eyes, served to render the helpless captive more lovable to the victorious soldier. In like manner, Jesus does not beautify us with His grace in order to make Himself love us, but in our utter desolation, He fastens His love upon us. "Of old His delights were with the sons of man." On the battle-field watered by His tears and sweat and blood, where devils tempt and men crucify, amid tumbling temples of heathendom and the groans and tears of captive penitents, the heroic Jesus chooses His bride.

"The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all that are upon the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you" (Deut. vii. 6-8). This is not the dry, heartless choice of an arbitrary will, but there is first a *loving* and then a *choosing*. It is "the election of grace." Love does the choosing. God is love, and, being love, all His acts and choosings flow from love, not from an arbitrary will. Love chooses those who are willing to be loved, those distressed ones who need love, those who are willing to be saved by love.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit"

(John xv. 16). Love is not arbitrary; love knows its object. Jesus, from his heart, chooses those to be His bride who are willing in this life "to be made conformable unto His death," and through the death of self to "bear much fruit." Even after entering the kingdom of Christ, our rank in that kingdom is according to the measure of our drinking His cup and being baptised with His baptism (Matt. xx. 20-23).

3. *The domestication of the soul in the Divine family.* "Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house." There was to be a complete change of home-life and of domestic relations. It was not to be a rough, uncivil, coerced marriage, such as occurred among all Gentile nations, and even the so-called cultured Greeks and Romans; but a genuine love-scheme of indirections and wooings. Here is a touch of domestic civilization in those dark ages superior to anything in heathenism. The soldier loved the gentle captive on the battle-field, but there was to be such a wealth of wisdom displayed in the overture of that love, as to completely win its object, making her not only the weeping captive of war, but the willing captive of love. When the victor had led his prize to his home, and she found herself surrounded by a mother's love, and the tender sympathies of sisters and friends, it would serve to assuage her grief, and

also cause the tender buds of gratitude, esteem, and affection, to spring forth in her desolate heart toward her gallant captor. But how rough and meagre is this bit of domestic poetry compared to the infinite energy and delicateness of the love of Jesus; and the far-reaching plans and tender scheming of that love to dry up our penitential woes and make us glad captives to its will! We are all familiar with the idea of adoption, the witness of the Spirit, which makes us feel that we are the children of God at the time of our justification (Rom. v. 1; Gal. iv. 6), but the line of thought in this lesson is somewhat different from the adoption of a child; it is the adoption of a bride—a bosom partner—and we must remember that as the chords in a piano all harmonize, yet each is twined separately, so each truth in Scripture has its own line of correlative passages, without conflicting with other lines of truth. Many Scriptures represent Jesus as bringing us to His Father's family and adopting us His children; there are other Scriptures representing the espousal of the soul to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom.

Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my

Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

Even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.—ISA. lvi. 3-5.

In these verses we see the Saviour gathering the disconsolate Gentiles to the home circle of the redeemed, and honoring them even above the Jews, giving them a *place* and a *name*, *better* than of sons and daughters. But what can that be, unless it means that from the outcast and grace-conquered Gentiles Jesus will gather His bride?

What infinite care does Jesus take to domesticate us in His Father's family, to draw out our affections to angels and saints, to make us feel perfectly at home in the "heavenly places."

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn. —
HEB. xii. 18-23.

How slow we are to appreciate this heavenly

home circle to which Christ brings the soul He desires to espouse.

4. *Transformation of the mind.* "And she shall shave her head and pare her nails." The hair is an emblem of power, of glory, of beauty and unction. In the soul's espousal to Jesus, there must be a complete transformation; all of its natural power, glory, and beauty, must be shorn away, so that it may take on the power, beauty, and glory, of Jesus, inwrought by the Holy Spirit. Samson said to Delilah, "If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me" (Judges xvi. 17-19). Samson lost his God-given strength; but, conversely, we must be shorn of our natural strength, our inherent self-sufficiency. Not only is it true with regard to unregenerate persons, but, in a great degree, it is true of believers who are not fully crucified; it is next to impossible for them to conceive how full they are of their own strength, their own wisdom and self-sufficiency. And the worst of it is that, until we are utterly crucified, we are so blind to our own self-conceit and self-sufficiency. It breaks out in sermon, song, conversation, Christian testimony, writing, at every pore of life. What multitudes of partially illuminated Christians at this hour, think they will get holy by good resolutions, think they can correct and tame the depravity of their natures!

Alas! is there one in a thousand who really apprehends the extent of the fall, the utter poverty of the soul? Yes, we must be shorn; even though we have been captured and chosen and brought into the celestial family circle, there is a luxuriant growth of subtle self-conceit, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, which must be shaved off till our natural strength is bald and pared away down to the very quick of the soul's life.

What a strange and alarming experience it is, that when the believer begins to seek earnestly for an increase of grace and power, God answers him by revealing more than ever his spiritual poverty and utter weakness, so that what little strength he had is shorn from him. Ah, soul! in order that the new locks of God-given energy may cover thy head, those remnants of natural strength, of natural will-power, which have so often deceived thee, and in which thou hast so often unconsciously trusted, must all be shaved away. God's strength is made perfect only at the point where our weakness is made perfect.

The hair is not only a type of strength, but of beauty (Cant. iv. 1), and of honor (Isa. iii. 24), and of unction (Ps. cxxxiii. 2), and of glory (1 Cor. xi. 15). Hence, in order to our entire transformation and union with our Divine Captor, all our natural glory, our carnal beauty, our self-esteemed wisdom and unction, our

human will-power, and mere human virtue, must be shaved away to make room for the glorious products of grace. Oh, what desolation God has to make all through us to beautify us for Himself! Christian people think it is all right for God to desolate sinners, in order to convert them; yet thousands of them are under the miserable delusion that *they* must not be desolated in order to their perfect transformation into the mind of Jesus. How the mighty salvation of God must drive rough-shod over the pet idols of our heads: our views and theories, and human prudence, and fastidious tastes, and churchly pride, our mixed goodness and the cold, moonshine-beauty of our half-hearted devotion; these long, pretty, Absalom locks of uncrucified nature must be shorn by the scissors of God's Word, down to the very scalp, till in self-hatred we seek only the beauty, and strength, and glory, which comes from God. Then we shall loathe the splendid wisdom of men as heartily as we loathe their crimes, for they both proceed from the same vile root of self.

5. *The change of raiment.* "And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her." Here is another item in the soul's preparation for perfect union with the Lord. You will observe it is not the raiment of her gay, heathen

life, which she is to put off, but the raiment of her captivity. We are to put away the garniture of serfdom—even of religious serfdom. Throughout the Scriptures, robes, garments, clothing, raiment, are used in a Scriptural sense to express those moral qualities which deck and garniture the soul. The very word “*habit*” refers to a garment for the body, and also to the daily attitude and carriage of the soul. There is an envelopment about the soul, some habit, or manner, or expression, some air, or tone—a moral investment, woven out from the quality of the inner spirit, which forms its appropriate clothing. Some are clad in pride: their looks, voice, motion, and soul’s expression, indicate that “pride covers them as a garment.” Others are draped in melancholy: their heart is a loom which weaves only what merchants call “mourning goods.” Multitudes of Christians are clothed with the garments of spiritual bondage, like the case in our text. We can see it in sermons, prayers, testimony, religious work, spiritual conversation, and even in singing, there is a restraint, a reserve, an over-caution, which indicates that the soul is tied at various points by invisible strings. They lack that frank, fresh, full, free motion of soul which perfect love has. Persons who are well dressed (I do not say extravagantly dressed) always have a freedom

and ease in company which it is impossible to have when conscious of wearing rents or patches likely to be seen. That is exactly true with the soul. The soul is instinctively aware of a rent or patch in its experience, and it instinctively moves around in the royal family with an effort to conceal its shabbiness. Before the soul can be wedded to Christ, it must be freed from all the bondage investments, and freed from the old, shoddy threads of self, out of which the bondage raiment is woven. For, be it remembered, that the antinomian heresy of the soul being full of depravity, and at the same time clothed in the mere, imputed robes of Christ's personal holiness, is a theoretical fiction, and propagated by the clumsiest perversions of a few verses. A true spiritual wardrobe is opened in Col. iii. 8-14, and Rev. vii. 14.

God changes and whitens the soul's raiment by changing and cleansing the heart-threads and spirit mechanism which produce the investment. The King's wife is clothed in wrought gold, not imputed gold (Ps. xlv. 13).

6. *Weaned from old relationships.* "And she shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month." The balance of the thought is implied, though not expressed; namely, that after she has bewailed her parents a month, she is to bewail them *no more*. She is

to bid an everlasting farewell to the old life, even in its subtlest and tenderest forms; and every tendril of her heart be gladly twined around the new and superior one to whom she is espoused. Now, if any one thinks this Scripture was not fashioned so as to shadow forth spiritual things, we have simply to read the forty-fifth Psalm, a most glowing description of the Messiah-King and His bride, and in which direct reference is made to this being weaned from all mere earthly relationships, in order to be the most beautiful and acceptable to Jesus. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou Him." What a depth and perfection of deadness to the world is suggested in this passage! Old worldly ties, carnal friendships, the merely intellectual and social bonds, all semi-earthly affinities, not only broken and gone from the heart, but even forgotten like a dream. This weaning of the soul is not so much a preliminary as it is a result of sanctification. David testifies to this advanced experience, this experience of quietly nestling in the bosom of God, being content with His will, and having the heart set loose from all things earthly and transitory; a heart so in love with Jesus that it

readily forgets all contrary loves. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps. cxxxi. 2).

7. *Wedded to Christ.* "And thou shalt be her husband and she shall be thy wife." "On thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. She is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's palace." "There are threescore queens and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the choice one of her that bare her." "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty." Oh, how Jesus loves the soul that is abandoned to His arms without any reserve, that has bid an unchangeable, eternal adieu to the last vestiges of old heathen self! the soul that will gladly take him for better, for worse; the soul that thirsts to drink of His spirit, to partake of the traits of His mind, and to go forth with Him on the battle-fields of time, sharing His fortunes in the plan of saving the world. The poor, distressed maiden who was captured on a battle-field, after being transformed in her affections and united to her royal captor, rides forth by his side to make further conquests upon the ranks from

whence she was won. Hence we see in Revelation xiv. 1-5 and xix. 1-14, that the saints "rode on white horses with Jesus" (riding the hobby of a holy doctrine) were the hundred and forty-four thousand, who are called "the wife of the Lamb," the called, and chosen, and faithful, who had put off the raiment of bond-service, and "were clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

What multitudes there are who, having been captured by the Lord Jesus from the ranks of Satan, have not yet become perfectly one with Him in heart, and will, and life, making Him and His purposes the unmixed choice and glory of their **existence** !

CHAPTER VI.

THE THREE HEARKENS.

Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

My righteousness is near; my salvation has gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall

be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation. — ISA. li. 1-8.

THE word "hearken" is composed of two words: *hear*, and *ken*; the one denotes the function of the ear, the other the function of the eye. Hearing and seeing are the two most acute, essential, and far-reaching senses with which our bodies are endowed. The word "hearken" expresses the united and concentrated powers of hearing and seeing, upon any one given thing; and when our God says to us, "hearken!" He means that all our capacity for *looking* and *listening*, all our powers of undistracted attention, shall be centred upon the information He is about to give us. As the forms and elements of nature influence us to the extent that they penetrate and fill our physical senses, so the things of God are controlling realities in us to the extent that they enter and occupy our inner spiritual senses. Divine truth enters into us in proportion to the strength and continuity of our attention to it.

To hearken to God! what a serene, blessed attitude of soul! To leave every receptive capacity open to Him — the ear listening, the eye looking, the heart longing, for every step of His feet, every word of His lips, and every touch of His Spirit!

In this fifty-first chapter of Isaiah, the word

“hearken” is addressed three times to as many different shades of religious character. In the first verse the Lord says “hearken” to those who seek; in the fourth verse He says “hearken” to those just entering the blessing; in the seventh verse He says “hearken” to those who who are in the knowledge and conscious possession of the blessing. To each of these “hearkens” there is attached specific instructions and promises exactly adapted to the moral state of the person addressed.

1. “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord.” This “hearken” is to the seeker; and whether it be the seeking for the “forgiveness of sins,” or seeking the perfect “cleansing from all sin,” the same truth holds good in either case; and yet, judging from the fact that God is addressing His own people (verse 4), and from the instruction immediately following, it applies with special pointedness to those seeking entire holiness. There are two items of encouragement given to this seeker of holiness.

The first is, look at what God has already done for you, and take courage. “Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.” Every converted soul can look back to wonders of mercy already wrought in its favor. The Lord *first*

takes us up out of the mire, and *then* takes all the mire out of us. He first draws us out of Satan's pit, and then destroys the work of Satan out of us. Having done the former of these things for us, should we not be encouraged to press on and obtain the latter also?

The second item of encouragement is looking at the example of those who have received the very grace we seek. "Look unto Abraham your father, for I blessed him." Our fathers and mothers were as sinful by nature and weak as we are; they had as corrupt hearts and as sore difficulties to encounter as we have, and if God "called them and blessed them" with perfect love, and led them through the lowly "valley of blessing so sweet," will He not do the same for us? After presenting these two strong encouragements to the seeker who is "following after holiness," He then holds out a promise of great wealth, and just such a promise as appeals most tenderly and effectively to a sad and weary heart. This promise (in third verse) is specifically that of the Abiding "Comforter." The perfection of the promise is seen in the fact that it is exactly seven-fold, corresponding to the seven lamps of the golden candle-stick. Notice how the "waste," "wilderness," "desert," things of the heart, are to be replaced by the seven words, "comfort," "Eden," "garden,"

“joy,” “gladness,” “thanksgiving,” and “melody.” The promise begins on the minor strain of consolation, and rises through the gradation of blessing till every fibre of the heart rises to concert-pitch of full salvation (see Eph. v. 18-20). This is held forth for the “seeker” who will “hearken.”

2. The second “hearken” in this chapter is in verse 4, and is particularly applicable to those who are at the very edge of the blessing sought. As the first “hearken” was accompanied with promises specifically adapted to the seeker, so the second “hearken” is accompanied with promises that point directly to the act of *trusting and receiving* the salvation. “My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth.” If the seeker has followed fully the first “hearken,” he is in such an attitude that God can say to him, “My righteousness is at your very door; I have given commandment to save you (Ps. lxxi. 3); My salvation is gone forth, and is already speeding its lightning flight to your waiting heart.”

If we look carefully through verses 4, 5 and 6, connected with the second “hearken,” we can see in them a vivid picture of what transpires in the soul just at the moment of its gliding into the sanctifying fountain — just in the act of crossing the trust-line into full salvation.

“A law shall proceed from My mouth.” The act of receiving salvation is the very thing of receiving the words that proceed from His mouth, as the authoritative “law of life, which frees us from the law of sin.” As we enter the realm of entire purity, and tread the margin of it, we come to a place where faith has no stepping-stones but the simple words from His mouth.

“On mine arm shall they trust” (verse 5). How true to experience is this order of statement: when our souls do fully repose upon the promises from His mouth as the only and sufficient authority for our perfect cleansing from sin, we discover that we are actually trusting *on the arm* of infinite Love. Resting on the naked promise from His mouth in verse 4, turns out to be serenely riding on the out-stretched Arm of power in verse 5. We always find the Promiser concealed in His promise; the written promise is the sleeve in which the real arm of the Infinite Spirit abides; fall on the sleeve and you will touch the arm.

This picture of the “faith act” is not complete till we take in verse 6, where we see as in a panorama all visible things vanishing away, and the soul becoming detached from created things, settles down into the “everlasting salvation of God.” True, this verse will have its ex-

ternal and literal accomplishment at the end of the world; **but** it also has its interior, spiritual fulfillment, in the soul, when the self-life expires, and all the heartstrings are cut from earthly things and fixed in God; then, *so far as that soul is concerned*, "the heavens have vanished away like smoke, and the earth has waxed old like a garment." Such a soul wears the world as "a loose garment," and is prepared to have it come to an end at any time.

We find here in these three verses, three great concomitant truths arranged in the order which self-evidence confirms, when the soul enters fully into purity and power; first, the bold, steady step upon the Word "proceeding from His mouth;" then the conscious touch of a Spirit-power, "trusting on His arm;" and then the purified spiritual vision, piercing the transitoriness of outward things; or, as it is emphatically expressed in this sixth verse, the "lifting up of the eyes to behold" the surroundings of nature only as an empty cloud; to see that the heart has been divorced from time and sense, and to make the blissful discovery that it is sinking into that full "salvation which shall be forever and ever," and only broadens in its ineffable manifestations as eternal ages roll! These verses — like all others in Scripture — are not tumbled together in a hap-hazard manner, but

are linked with inconceivable precision, and successive order. But we can discover those links in the written Word, only about as fast as the chain is wrought in our experience. The repose on God's Word, the touch of an Almighty arm, and an anointed eye to pierce through space and time: what an epoch to the soul! How is it reached? By hearkening to the sweet, omnipotent voice. "Give ear unto me."

I have been forcibly struck with that sententious expression: "Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isa. lv. 3). How simple! how sublime! The river of crystal love flowing into my panting spirit, simply by my listening to the ripple of its flow! Cease your useless struggling; hush the self-noise of your will and heart; get quiet; listen to Jesus, — only *let* His Word float into your ears, down into your heart, and it will heal. A boy falls on the pavement, muddies his clothing, and gets up crying. Hark! a band of music is just turning down the street, playing "Home, sweet home." The boy hearkens — all his nerves centre then in his ears; the melody pours through his little vexed brain like a flood of balm, washing away his little grief, and transforming the whole child into a bundle of delight. He listened; that was all. Ah! if our entire soul will but hearken to Christ, His Word will heal our sores, His voice soften and pacify us.

3. The third "hearken," in verse 7, is addressed to those who have received the gift of the Spirit — who have entered the realm of *full assurance*. "Hearken, ye that *know* righteousness; in whose *heart is my law*." This is a bugle-call for patient, loving heroism on the part of those who have received the blessing sought; that they must be brave, loving, long-suffering witnesses to the salvation found. The Voice now commands the purified soul not to fear reproach and revilings. Notice, there is no allusion in this chapter to reproach and persecution, till after the soul becomes *a witness to what it consciously knows of salvation*. This is ever the order. In the Beatitudes, the blessedness of persecution comes after the blessedness of heart purity.

The soul that has reached *full assurance* must utter itself: the wondrous seven-fold promise — the "comfort," the "Eden," the "garden," the "joy," the "gladness," the "thanksgiving," and the "melody," offered to the seeker in verse 3, have been transmuted into experience in verse 7, and like an artesian well, the fountain of pure love rushes forth in testimony upon men; but the very overflow of this well, while entering the soil, will also give an occasion for the briars and thorns of "reproach" to grow along its course; the ringing bells of testimony will often

wake the growling wolves along the path of the sanctified believer.

I think every truly purified soul, soon after finding the experience, will hear a gentle yet authoritative Voice whispering the mandate of *courage* in the recesses of the heart. "Tell it, my child! tell it! Report the sweet miracle I have wrought in you; lovingly, bravely, constantly tell it. Be not afraid of reproach; it is I, be not afraid." Oh! it is worth a universe to know that God talks to your heart in that strain!

And then, what a scene of contrast is presented in verse 8! Here we see the vast army of cold critics and persecutors—those who spurn a sanctification testimony—those who inuendo and reproach the holy specialists—those who count the cleansing blood a common thing,—all these in the lapse of a few years are seen melting away like old, "moth-eaten garments," while, on the other hand, the tried and true blood-washed witnesses of Jesus, with experiences of perennial green, and gathering humility and love from every trial, are seen passing on "from generation to generation."

We have in these three "hearkens" the beginning, progress, and triumph of a soul in the history of full salvation. This great salvation depends upon the degree of intensity with which

we *hear* and *ken* the truth of God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."

CHAPTER VII.

THE FEEDING OF ELIJAH.

THERE is something both interesting and instructive in the extraordinary modes in which God fed the Prophet Elijah on several occasions. He was supplied with food in an extraordinary manner; first, by the ravens; then, by the poor widow; then, by the Angel Jehovah himself. I do not claim to have discovered the exact spiritual significance of all this, but I can certainly draw from it lessons for my own heart, which may be a help also to others. We see his table spread first, on the plain of *law*, nature, and its instincts; secondly on the plain of *human fellowship* and combined faith; thirdly, on the plain of the *supernatural* and communion with celestial beings.

1. *The feeding by the ravens* (see 1 Kings xvii. 3-6). God said to Elijah, "Hide thyself by the brook Cherith, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the

brook." How simple the words, "I have commanded the ravens." How God holds every element and law of nature under His immediate "command," and can work all to the benefit of His children. Those ravens were not aware of any special command from God, they simply followed a mere impulse impressed on their instincts by the hidden finger of their Creator. They brought the prophet two good meals a day, with all the silence and undeviating regularity of a natural law. There is a correspondence to this in the way God feeds His children in the infant stages of grace. Not only are we convicted by the law and led to Christ; but after we are converted we are at first nourished through what may be termed the *natural law of religion*. As a young vine needs a trellis to lean on, so the young believer needs specific and external and prescribed *routine duties* in order to bring the soul to the habits of grace. He cannot yet nourish himself from deep spiritual processes, and needs the regularity of set times and rules like the instinctive ravens to serve as conductors of soul food.

2. *Fed by the widow* (1 Kings xvii. 8-9). "Arise, get thee to Zarephath; behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." Did God utter an articulate command to the widow to feed Elijah? The record does

not so indicate. He who "commanded" the ravens "commanded" also the widow; but God articulates His words according to the nature addressed. The ravens were creatures of instinct, and God issued his command to them in the shape of a new instinct within them; but the widow was a creature of *faith*, and God issued His "command" to her in the shape of a new and vigorous stretch of faith. The highest voice of God's commandment is when it is uttered in the *bias of souls*. Here we see Elijah fed from the table of *faith* and *fellowship*. Notice, the visits of the ravens had the appearance of natural law and instinct; but there was neither instinct nor natural law in the incoming of meal into the barrel: in the first case it looked like reposing on a law; in the other it was repose on a naked promise. It was not only faith, but a conjoining of faith. The prophet and the widow helped each other by their mutual and perfect trust. After God has fed us for a season through the medium of external duties, He bids us *arise* and go forward. He takes away the routine props of our experience or shows us their insufficiency, leads us to some believing or illuminated soul for specific instruction or fellowship, removes the natural phenomena away from us, takes away signs and brings us by a blessed "command" to trust his naked promise for our salvation and food of life.

3. *Fed by the angel* (1 Kings xviii. 5-8). Here we find Elijah separated from all human beings, in utter despair of human help, panting to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. In this state of mind he slept, weary, hungry, and sad. An angel touched him, saying, "Arise and eat." On awaking he saw the warm cakes and bottle of water right at his pillow. This was repeated. This angel is called the angel of the Lord; he was the Angel Jehovah, the Lord Jesus. In this case we see Elijah fed on a supernatural plain, nourished directly from the hand of his Redeemer; and in addition to that, receiving a special and personal manifestation of the Lord. It is worth noticing that the food given by this angel possessed such invigorating power as to last through a forty days' journey.

There is something agreeing to this incident in the advanced experiences of sanctification. After the soul has entered the life of perfect trust, God often leads it into a solitariness of feeling and a period of separation from all human souls not unlike Elijah under the juniper tree, and Jesus in Gethsemane. He draws us from depending for nourishment upon intermediate laws and agencies, brings us to feed directly on Himself, the vitality of His precious flesh and blood,—the bread of His body and the

water of His living Spirit. When Elijah was farthest removed from other souls, the Lord most distinctly unveiled Himself; the same was true of John in Patmos. It is not that we cease to have fellowship, but there is a weaning from other souls, which furnishes an occasion for the most distinct and immediate views of the Lord.

Each of these modes of feeding contain suggestions worth elaborating had I space. I have only hinted at the principal ones. We discover progress at each step.

Progress as to the nearness of the food: at first it was wafted to him from an unknown distance; the next it was supplied in the house where he lodged; but at last it was placed at his very bolster (see margin). To use a military phrase, he was getting nearer each time to his base of supplies. Thus Jesus would "prepare tables for us" (Ps. xxii.), till we can find morning by morning the living food at our very bolsters.

We see progress in fellowship, at first with the works of God, then with the saints of God, then with the personal Lord. We see progress in the disclosure of Divine agency; in the feeding by the ravens God mantles His agency under the mute instincts of the birds; in feeding from the mysterious and unexhausted barrel, the immediate agency of God comes a little

nearer to view, His miraculous finger is almost visible at the bottom of the barrel, yet no person is seen; but in the feeding by the Angel Jehovah all intermediate veils are laid aside, the agency of the blessed Provider stands revealed direct in familiar love and personal form. Thus He, whose very name is the Bread of Life, "feeds us with food convenient for us," from this infant state of grace up to those sturdier experiences of abandonment and trust in which He can make free with us, and give us our daily bread, as it were, from His ungloved hand; for the glove is ever on His hand, and the veil is ever on His face, except to those whose eyes are anointed to "see Him who is invisible."

CHAPTER VIII.

SCRIPTURE EMBLEMS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

AMONG the various emblems which the Scriptures use to represent the office and work of the Holy Spirit, we may select four as perhaps illustrating the main features, in the Spirit's mission; viz., the *air*, the *fire*, the *water*, and the *oil*. Perhaps none of these emblems is sufficient to set forth all the work of the Spirit, and so all of them are requisite in giving us an elaborate picture of His manifold work upon, and within, the human soul.

Upon a careful examination of these various emblems, I am convinced that each one sets forth some particular work of the Spirit; that these types are not used indiscriminately, nor always synonymously, but that the Spirit Himself selected these which best adumbrated His mission, and uses each type for a special reason.

Let us look at these four types in detail.

I. The type of the *wind*, or *air*.

Gen. ii. 7: "And the Lord God formed man

of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The expression, "breath of life," in this verse, is more strictly, in the original, "breath of lives," teaching us that the Holy Spirit is the Divine agent of communicating vitality to the creation; not only of spiritual life, but the natural, animal life, which is in the body, was communicated by the Holy Spirit. The office of the Spirit is here presented as that of a producer of life. There is nothing said here as to the empowering of the individual, or the making him holy, but simply the impartation of a spiritual life to the frame which had been fashioned by the Lord Jesus. This seems to be the office of the Spirit, set forth in Gen. i. 2. "The Spirit of God moved," like an all-pervading vital force, on the surface of the waters; and at the various fiats issued by the Word of God, this all-pervading Spirit imparted life to the earth and sea. The point to be noticed is, that when the Spirit is compared to "wind," it always sets Him forth as the generator of life, or the originator of lost life from the soul.

Job xxxiii. 4: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." This is a very clear statement of the office of the Spirit in producing life, set forth

under the emblem of breath or air. When Job says, the Spirit of God hath made me, it does not at all conflict with the expression of St. John which says, "All things were made by Jesus Christ, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Jesus is evidently set forth in the Scriptures as the One creating all things, under the command of God the Father, and as having authority to send forth His Spirit, utilizing, harmonizing, beautifying and vitalizing the work of His hands. When Job says, "The Spirit of God made me," he must refer to his thinking, conscious spirit, and not to his mere animal frame. And this corresponds with the text from Genesis, that by the inbreathing of God, that is, the Spirit of God, man became a living soul. We will notice in this text that Job does not say the *water* of the Almighty hath given me life; or the *fire* of the Almighty hath given me life; but the "breath" of the Almighty, that is, the Spirit, under the emblem of the wind, hath given me life.

Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10: "Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

This text is in exact conformity with the previous ones, that when the Spirit is set forth under the emblem of the wind or breath, it always indicates His office as implanting life or restoring life that had been lost.

The wind is nowhere used as a type of sanctification in the Word of God. It is nowhere used as a type of teaching or instruction. It is nowhere used as a type of destroying sin, or cleansing the heart, or illuminating the mind; but it is invariably used to indicate *the gift of life*. This valley of dry bones represented the backsliders in God's kingdom, who had lost the spirituality once given. Here we see the Holy Ghost as a mighty wind blowing over this dreary scene, restoring life again to the dead. The memorable words of Jesus, in St. John's Gospel, third chapter and eighth verse, are in confirmation of this interpretation. Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus concerning the new birth; first of its absolute necessity, and secondly of its mysteriousness: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Christ introduced the metaphor of the wind, as an illustration of the office of the Spirit, but he applies it only to the work of the new birth, to the imparting of the life of God to the

soul. Some one may ask, "Was not the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, compared to wind?" I answer, the Scriptures do not say so. The record says there came a "*sound*" from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. The *sound* was like the wind. It does not say that there came a rushing wind, but a rushing sound, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. It does not say the wind filled the house, but the mysterious roaring noise, resembling the noise of the tempest, filled the house. The emblem selected by the Spirit on that occasion was fire. The sound was produced by the fire, though it resembled the sound of wind. I think that the Scriptures, carefully searched, will bear out this interpretation, that when the Spirit is compared to wind, it describes His office only in the work of implanting life, either in nature, or in the soul of man.

II. The emblem of *fire*.

Let us now notice the emblem of fire as setting forth one of the offices of the Spirit. Mr. George Smith, in his harmony of the Divine dispensations, makes out a very clear argument that the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life, mentioned in Gen. iii. 24, was really a "revolving flame," located between the two cherubims, corresponding

with the Shekinah flame which was afterwards located between the cherubim on the Mercy-seat, and that this "revolving fire" was a type of the Holy Spirit. I shall not be able to make all the quotations from the Scriptures in which the fire symbol is used, and only select a few illustrative passages.

In Lev. iv. 4-10, we have an account of the sin-offering which was to be consumed by fire. We shall find that just as the wind typifies the life-imparting office of the Spirit, so fire typifies the cleansing, sanctifying office of the Spirit. And as wind is nowhere the emblem of sanctification, so fire is nowhere the emblem of regeneration. The fire emblem is used when the idea is that of consuming, destroying, purging away. We know that in nature the atmosphere is the preserver and communicator of life. All animals and plants, and the very drops of water, live only by and through the atmosphere; but that the atmosphere of itself has no power of purification. We know, also, in nature, that fire is a great purifier; that the heat of the sun, clouds of electricity, the burning of forests and of cities, the kindling of a fire in a sickroom, are powerful agents in consuming disease, and in purifying. I think that we shall find that when the Spirit is set forth as fire in the Scriptures, it will correspond very closely to the office of fire in nature.

Isa. ix. 5: "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire."

Isa. vi. 6, 7: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

In this case Isaiah had had the Divine life imparted to him years before. It was not regeneration that he needed, but to have the remains of the old sinful nature completely destroyed. Hence the work of the Spirit is set forth as a live coal of fire burning the dross of sin out of his soul.

Matt. iii. 11, 12: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me, shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." There are two kinds of burning,—either sin must be burned out of the soul, or the soul itself must burn forever. In this passage we see the prominent thought is that of destruction, of consuming.

Acts ii. 3, 4: "And there appeared unto them

cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." It is worthy to note the two distinct receivings of the Holy Spirit by the Apostles. Shortly after Christ's resurrection, he met the disciples in a private room and breathed on them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost (see John xx. 22). That was doubtless the Holy Spirit implanting within them more clearly than ever before, the new life, and His office is set forth under the breathing. And when these same disciples received the full sanctifying baptism on the day of Pentecost, He came under the form of fire. The work that the Spirit wrought in their hearts on that day, is interpreted by the work He wrought upon Isaiah, and by the words which Peter uses in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, where he says: "God gave them the Holy Ghost, purifying their hearts by faith."

Heb. xiii. 11, 12: "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." In this passage Paul teaches us that the burning of the sin-offering was a type of sanctifying the soul

through the blood of Christ by the operation of the Spirit.

III. The emblem of *water*.

The third emblem under which the Spirit is set forth is that of water, either in the form of dew, or rain, or shower, or river, or bubbling wells. I have not space to put down all the quotations that might be collected under this head. After searching the Scriptures through to find the mind of the Spirit as to what is the significance of the water emblem, I have reached the conclusion that it bodies forth the thought of cleansing and nourishing.

We have been taught by the early writers of Methodism the two-foldness of sanctification. One is negative, the other is positive. The negative side of sanctification is that of emptying, removing, destroying the carnal mind. The positive side of sanctification involves the filling of the purified heart with light and love; the multiplying within it the graces of the Spirit, and enjoying those graces. Now, so far as I can discover, this is just the significance of the two sanctifying emblems of fire and water. Fire represents purity with the idea of destruction — of consuming. Water represents the idea of purity with the positive upbuilding of the soul in truth and strength and love. Let me call your attention to a few proof texts.

Isaiah xlv. 3, 4: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses."

This idea of comparing the Spirit to the water-courses flowing through the soul, upon whose ever-moist banks grow the flourishing trees of grace and righteousness, is one largely set forth in the Scriptures. (See Psalm i.; Ezek. xlvii.; Rev. xxii.)

This positive side of sanctification is set forth in Ezek. xxxvi. 25-30: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you, and I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and I will multiply the fruit of the tree."

In this chapter we have a striking picture of holiness with the concomitant idea of nourishing and building up the soul in the fruit of the Spirit.

Ephesians v. 55-27: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Here again we see the idea of sanctification accompanied with its positive side of being filled with glory and without blemish. When the Scriptures use the emblem of fire it is mostly in connection with the blood of sacrifices, showing that the Spirit, when acting as a fire, applies the blood of Christ. But when the Scriptures represent the Spirit as water, it speaks of the truth, or the Word of God, from which it would seem that the Spirit applying the blood produces sanctification in its negative form of cleansing, destroying the evil; and that the Spirit, applying the Word or truth of God, produces sanctification in its positive form of nourishing, strengthening and upbuilding the soul. Jesus says, "Sanctify through thy truth, thy Word is truth."

I think a great many scriptures could be compiled to sustain these remarks. It may be worthy to notice that in the representations of the work of the Spirit in the future world the only type that is used is that of water. There will be no new impartation of life to the soul beyond death. Neither will there be any work of destroying the carnal mind from us beyond death. Hence we have no type of the Spirit acting as wind or as fire upon the saints in the future world; but the purified soul will forever need to be sustained by the truth—the living

Word of God — which will be its food in the future economy. Hence the Scriptures represent the Spirit as acting under the form of water.

Revelation vii. 17: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." The various books and chapters of God's Word are the living fountains of waters. The Scriptures have not been given in vain, and somewhere in the history of the saint everything is to be interpreted entirely to his mind and applied with power and unction to his heart. And Jesus, through the agency of his Spirit, will lead his glorified saints through all the words of God, and open them up within the heart as fountains of living waters. The vision that John gives us in the last chapter of Revelation of a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, is a most charming type of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, streaming forever through the souls of the glorified, like a crystal river, imparting immortal spring and verdure to the soul, causing all the fruits and graces of the Divine life to flourish and grow within it.

IV. The emblem of *oil*.

Oil is a very frequent type in the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, and yet this type has its specific significance. The oil emblem has no reference to the giving of life, and has no reference to sanctification or cleansing, but signifies always the endowing of the purified nature with gifts, illumination, power and wisdom.

In Exodus xxx. 22-33, we have an account of the composition of the holy anointing oil. There was a special command that no other oil should be made like it. Whosoever compounded any like it should be cut off from his people, from which we gather the truth that when the Spirit acts as an Anointer, bestowing His gifts and illuminations, they can never be counterfeited by any art or learning, or any natural genius or necromancy or hypocrisy, and whoever attempts to counterfeit the gifts of the Spirit shall be cut off.

1 Sam. xvi. 13: "Then Samuel took the horn and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward."

Here we see a clear illustration of the peculiar office of the Spirit as an Anointer. From the time David was anointed by Samuel, the Spirit began to call forth all the faculties and gifts of his nature, or else began to clothe him with those gifts which would especially fit him

to be the king of Israel, and the head and leader of the Jewish Church.

We are familiar with the instances in Leviticus of how the priests were set apart, purified by the sprinkling of blood, and then anointed with oil, typifying the enduement of spiritual gifts, rendering them thoroughly competent to be teachers and spiritual guides of the peoples.

Psalm xcii. 10, 11: "I shall be anointed with fresh oil. Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me." In this passage we see that the anointing was not for the purpose of cleansing, but for opening the eyes and ears, the quickening and strengthening of the spiritual senses, to comprehend the dealings of God with men.

Psalm xxiii. 5, 6: "Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

In this passage we see the anointing oil is attended with a deep discernment into the dealings of God, an apprehension of future blessedness, and the confirmation or the assurance of eternal salvation. While the Spirit is the agent that works in us in every stage of grace, yet He has distinct kinds of work to perform within

the soul. At one time it is a work of destruction. At another, a work of restoring, healing or strengthening the spirit. At another, of endowing with peculiar gifts and power for specific ends. At another, of revealing to the soul things to come. At another, confirming the soul unto eternal salvation. This last work of the Spirit seems to be the one referred to in this quotation from the twenty-third Psalm. The anointing that David speaks of seems to have carried with it an inward conviction and deep certainty that goodness and mercy should follow him all his life, and that he would dwell forever with God.

Psalm cv. 14, 15: "He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

In this place the anointing which God poured on Abraham and the patriarchs, seems to secure to them special preservation and privileges.

Acts x. 38: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." Here we see that the anointing was not for the purpose of making holy, but was the special enduement with power to heal all diseases, break the fetters of Satan, and deliver those who were oppressed. This corres

ponds with the prophecy in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Doubtless all ministers and Christian workers who will follow the Lord perfectly in the regenerating and sanctifying offices of the Spirit, will receive each in his measure this same anointing of the Spirit, of which Isaiah speaks. It is often the case that there are latent gifts within us, unknown capabilities of heart, or mind, or voice, or hand, which conversion does not unfold, which mere heart-cleansing as a negative process does not empower, but after we are converted, and after we are cleansed from inbred sin, we need this Divine oil, this peculiar office of the Spirit pouring himself over our whole being, like the oil on the head of Aaron that ran down to the skirts of his garments, clothing the entire mind with light and strength and skill to do just the work described in this prophecy of Isaiah.

1 J'hn ii. 27: "But the anointing which ye

have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

Here again we see that the anointing has a special reference to teaching, communicating spiritual truth, to the discerning of truth from error. The same idea is presented in the twentieth verse: "But ye have an unction — that is, an anointing — from the Holy One, and ye know all things." This knowing of all things refers to the discerning of the true Christ from the false Christs spoken of in verses 18, 19. How true this Scripture is being fulfilled to-day! There are so many false Christs not only in the world, but even in the visible Church. So many who preach science and think it the Gospel. So many false notions respecting holiness. So many professed followers of Christ who have in their physiognomy the image of the world. It requires nothing less than the specific anointing spoken of in this chapter to enable the believer to discern the true from the false.

This anointing is given after the work of heart cleansing. It is nowhere represented as performing the work of purity, but is a special endowment of light and power from the Holy Ghost upon the sanctified soul.

I think if you will examine the work of the Spirit as set forth under these four types, you will find it in keeping both with the Scriptures and with experience.

And yet in order to be judges in this matter the soul must have the experiences described by these various types. It is the same Spirit that works in every stage of Christian life, and yet His special works are set forth by special emblems. No one type of nature is sufficient to body forth His whole ministry.

There are other types in Scripture, and yet perhaps they could all be classified under these four. Living as we do in a material world, and encompassed with material senses, God speaks to us through material emblems.

But the time is coming when He will not speak to us in parables, but will bring our spirits into immediate vision and communion with the Father. Then the soul will be able to dispense with all secondary terms and types, and having lost itself in the ocean of the Divine nature, and being one with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, it will not need to be taught any more, but will see and know all things in the cloudless comprehension which the Spirit will constantly give to the glorified soul.

CHAPTER IX.

BETHEL AND PENIEL.

IN the closing parts of the Bible, as in the Epistles, we have very accurate theological statements and definitions, but in the earlier portions of Scripture we have a panoramic theology written out in the lives of the patriarchs and prophets. Both of these forms of presenting truth are essential: they supplement and illustrate each other. Thus the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians have a living commentary in the life and experience of the patriarch Jacob. There are many religious teachers who, in order to avoid the Scriptural logic of the second blessing, will pervert and deceitfully handle large portions of Scripture. Nothing is more common than to hear ministers and other professed religious teachers representing Isaiah as an unregenerate man until his live-coal baptism; representing the hundred and twenty disciples as unconverted till the day of Pentecost; representing Moses as a half heathen till his burning-bush experience; and Jacob is slandered — with-

out a single Scripture warrant — as a skinflint and a thief until his Peniel experience. And this bearing of false witness against Bible characters, representing them as common sinners up to the period of their full salvation, is made right in the face of blazing statements of Scripture to the contrary. If we candidly peruse the progressive steps of the religious experience of Jacob, we shall see reflected, as in a mirror, the New Testament teachings of adoption, consecration, and the baptism of power. If we will read from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-third chapters of Genesis, we can readily crystallize all the items of religious truth around the following points.

I. Jacob's adoption of God.

In Gen. xxviii. 10-22, we can find all the New Testament elements entering into our adoption into the "house," or family of God.

1. *A way opened between God and man.* "He dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Jesus gives us to understand that this ladder was a type of Himself. Nathanael lived near the place of this ladder dream, and when Jesus met him He associated him with Jacob, calling him "an Israelite indeed." and

promising him he should “see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of mán,” in which Jesus identifies Himself as the veritable ladder from earth to heaven. Now the first requisite to a New Testament conversion is a mediation—an open way between the sinner and God, and this Jacob had in the ladder.

2. A revelation of the fatherhood of God to Jacob.

And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Could Jacob, could any one, have a more accurate, tender, and elaborate assurance of his adoption of God, than is conveyed in these remarkable expressions of Divine grace? Look at these merciful words. Would God address such words to an alien, to an unconverted soul? They were not spoken through an eloquent angel or a mumbling priest, but from Jehovah di-

rectly to Jacob. Here is an expression of Divine fatherhood, accompanied with a land-grant and a covenant of grace extending to all the families of the earth, and a promise of God's perpetual presence and of His keeping power. God never spoke such words to one who was not his child.

3. *Jacob recognized the gracious words coming from God.* "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not"; that is, he did not know the previous evening when he lay down that God was so near to him, but now the Divine presence is known. It was not one of those old-style, Calvinistic, hope-so conversions, in which a soul is supposed to be years finding out really whether God spoke to it or not; but he had the witness within him, the vision lingered in his soul, the heavenly message was fastened in his heart and memory.

The very name he gave to the spot — *Bethel* — *i. e.*, the house of God, indicates that he then felt himself within the walls of the covenant grace. The house of God is the family of God, the kingdom of God. His sins were forgiven, for he felt himself in the gate to heaven.

4. As a fruit of Jacob's conversion, he not only makes an open and enduring profession of God's manifestation to him, but he enters into a financial covenant with the Lord, to give Him

“one tenth of all his income.” God was so pleased with this financial covenant, that he made it the law for subsequent generations. If the giving of a tenth is God’s idea of religious business, and if that same idea was in Jacob’s heart, does it not prove that his heart had been so changed as to be in agreement with God? I have heard Jacob severely denounced for making this “money bargain” with God, yet the Lord emblazons His approval of this same money bargain, and made it a law for His church, and the very basis of that poor man’s prosperity. It were well if those who criticise Jacob as having no religion till Peniel, had themselves as remarkable and practical a conversion as he had at Bethel: for, be it remembered, that this penniless patriarch, twenty years before his full sanctification, founded a law of giving, which, if practised to-day by all professed Christians, it would literally flood the globe with benefactions, and leave no poor unsupplied.

II. *Jacob’s legal service.*

What do we mean by legality? We mean rendering service by law, by a rigid routine, by specified wages, a service that is measured off, as it were, by the yard and the pound; so much labor for so much joy, so much performing of duty for so much of salvation. This is where

the great bulk of nominal religionists are, trying to get such and such degrees of grace by the doing of such and such performances; serving God by the inch and ounce. The Epistle to the Galatians is a very elaborate and luminous unfolding of the principle of legal service. In this Epistle Paul states a general fact, that even the children of God, who are in their spiritual minority — not yet delivered from the native reasonings and carnality of nature — have, in their measure, the same legal bondage that many sincere, but unregenerate ceremonialists have. “Now I say that the heir (the regenerated soul), as long as he is a child (a babe yet partly carnal), differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors (under the influence of what this and that one may say, under the coercion of this and that performance), until the time appointed of the father — until he receives the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Spirit” (Gal. iv. 1-2).

There are four kinds of religious law. The first three always bring the soul into bondage, the last one alone brings true Scriptural liberty and joy of service. Before examining Jacob's legal service, let us notice briefly four laws.

First, is the so-called Adamic law; often alluded to by theologians, yet no one ever knew

what it was ; it never was written out ; it is referred to as the *ideal rule* of *exact propriety* in thought, word and act. This is the dreamy sort of perfection some people demand of us. Persons who are striving to think, act, feel, look, and move with the utmost geometrical precision, who are straining after some angelic or chiseled ideal of life, are the dupes and serfs of an impractical imagination. They have left the simple New Testament Jesus, and are serving a god of their fancy. Serving an ideal is the quintessence of soul slavery.

The second law is the ceremonial, the ritualistic, in which religion is prescribed and written out in external duties ; all of life and time is parcelled out into specified rites and prayers and performances ; religion is measured out by the inch and ounce, like feeding a baby with a spoon. Such a service produces weariness and slavery to body and mind. No soul ever found sweet peace and rest from going through a prescribed ritualism.

The third is the moral law, the ten commandments. This law differs widely from the ceremonial law. The latter was written by Moses, and abrogated by Christ, but the ten commandments were written by no creature, but by the finger of God, and were not repealed by Christ, as the Antinomians teach, but are binding on

all generations. Still it is impossible for any to keep the moral law until they are brought under the power of grace. It is here that imperfect Christians have their legal struggles. They have enough grace to make them love the moral law, and they strive to keep that law in the full spirit as well as the letter, but remaining impurity of heart foils their efforts, and brings them into a struggling bondage.

The fourth religious law is the evangelical "law of faith," "the law of life in Christ Jesus," "the perfect law of liberty," the "eleventh commandment," the "law of love out of a pure heart." This law of perfect faith, working by love, is the outlet from the bondage of the other laws. The law of faith and love is just the reverse of legality. The legalist thinks if he could just keep the law, then God would save him; but the believer goes to Jesus first to get fully saved, and then he can keep the law; and he can keep the law only so long as Jesus fully saves him.

Let us now look at the illustrative legal years of Jacob, before his full deliverance. Although he was a son and heir, yet he was under providential legal tutors, by which he learned those severe lessons which led him to a life of perfect trust. Jacob's legal bondage is described in the twenty-ninth and thirty-first of Genesis.

1. He was a child, but not in full, happy fellowship with his parents. Far away from home; and the faces of loved ones shone only in memory. How many of God's people are in a similar condition! Instead of going on to perfection, they have allowed the fear of some Esau to come between them and the smiles of God; still striving on without immediate communion with their heavenly Father.

2. An heir, yet working for stipulated wages. Inheriting the vast wealth of Abraham and Isaac, yet so far removed from his legitimate fortune as to be a hired servant. How many in the Church of Christ are in this state, serving for wages, doing this, giving that, going there, hoping thereby to get a little comfort. These heirs in exile, entitled to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, with its wealth of results, under some legal task-master serving for wages; so much work for so much religion.

2. He was under Laban, the Syrian. Laban is a very accurate type of the mere letter of the written law. The word Laban signifies "whiteness," and the mere letter of law, whether ceremonial or moral, is holy, just and good, yet in itself utterly void of all mercy or love. In judging of Bible characters, I take sides with the Lord. If I can find out the Lord's decision upon a person, I at once adopt it as mine, what-

ever the appearances to the contrary may be. There is not a trace of God's approval upon Laban. We can read between the lines that he was rigid, exacting, merciless; always driving a hard bargain, yet never getting rich: his daughters complained that their hard-hearted father "sold them," instead of giving them away; he reduced everything, even the sweetest affections of earth, to a mere trade. What a picture of cold, iron law! And yet legality is just such a spirit. It knows nothing but hard, driving duties; it reduces prayer and devotion, nay, even the soul's espousal to Christ, to a sort of a trade. It knows nothing of a glad, generous, love service.

4. Laban was never satisfied, but grew more and more exacting, and "changed Jacob's wages ten times." Such is the nature of legal service; it never yields peace, contentment, satisfaction. Let one attempt to follow out a religion of the mere letter; the duties are multiplied, tasks grow more irksome, anticipated experiences are not reached. How touching are the words of Jacob to Rachel and Leah, "Ye know that with all my power I have served your father, and your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times, but the God of my father hath been with me, and suffered your father not to hurt me." But for what grace Jesus gives to

his people in such a state, they would be crushed by the iron heel of legalism.

III. *Steps to liberty.*

1. "And the Lord said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and I will be with thee." There is nothing like the distinct, specific voice of God, calling the believer to spiritual liberty. Many will serve God year after year, in a hard, legal way. They may hear sermons and testimonies, and read books on the higher life, but somehow the truth does not dawn upon them till God, in His own way, brings on a crisis in their souls, and His call penetrates them: "Arise, get thee out of this bondage." All our preaching and writing is vain unless we can get God, by the Holy Spirit, to speak directly to souls Himself.

2. Jacob followed the call of God at once, without consulting a word with Laban (xxx. 20). So must you do, O tired and fettered soul! If you stop to consult the routine of duty, or consult other fettered Christians, you will get into deeper bondage. You must let the dead bury their dead, let dead religionists take care of dead forms, you follow Christ.

3. Laban chased Jacob down and searched his stuff (xxx. 36, 37). Thus it will be with you when you "set your face toward Mount

Gilead," the mount of healing balm ; some evil spirit will chase you, and search you ; try to entrap you back, charge you with rashness, presumption, aiming too high, acting without proper counsel ; anything to keep you in the old ruts.

4. When Laban found that Jacob and his family could not be turned back, then he gave them his kiss and blessing (xxxi. 55). Even the letter of the law, that killeth when you are under it, will turn and kiss you when you get free from it. The hard duties of life put on a sweet and friendly look after you get free from their drudgery. When you are put on an equality with law it will treat you very nicely ; but treat you rough if it is over you.

5. " As Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him " (xxxii. 1). These angels were precursors of victory, to encourage and prepare him for meeting the Angel of Covenant, who should transform him fully. Even so it is now ; when the believer presses on his way to the land of promise, good angels in some shape will meet him. Some witness, or teacher, or book, or evangel of grace, will be sent to meet such a soul to help it on.

IV. *Jacob's entire consecration.*

He had been consecrated to God ever since

his Bethel experience, but he had come to a crisis when every element of consecration was to be brought to perfection. Every believer is consecrated in a measure, yet very few have carried their self-sacrifice to God to the point of completeness. In the sacrifice of *his all* to God which Jacob made, we gather:—

1. *He yielded his all, item by item.* In sending his present to Esau to appease him—which was in reality committing it to the will of God—he parcelled it out, drove by drove, leaving a space between (xxxii. 13–23). This is a characteristic of entire consecration. The Holy Spirit, who conducts the believer through that exercise, presents to him an accurate analysis of all he has and is, and leads the soul to yield its effects up to God, item by item, up to the last atom.

2. *It was risking his all to an unknown destiny.* It was make or break; it was win all or lose all; it was complete victory or his destruction. No middle ground, no half-measure would answer. In his prayer (xxxii. 6–11), you see the distress of that crisis. He must run an infinite risk, and leave God to turn the scales. In after years he referred to this as “the day of his distress” (Gen. xxxv. 3). To entirely pass one’s self over to the unknown and eternal will of God, is a serious, eventful act. There often

sweeps before the mind, at such an hour, a vast field of possibilities, liabilities, and contingencies. For better, for worse; for weal or woe: it is the problem of *all* or *none*. In a certain sense, the soul *solemnly chooses to run an infinite risk with the incomprehensible purposes* of God for both worlds. A superficial Christian is leagues away from such an act.

3. *His strength had to be broken by the Lord.* "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him; and when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him" (xxxii. 24, 25). After committing all he had to the providence of God, it remained for him to put *himself* into the Divine hand. Left alone with God. Religion, in its last analysis, reduces itself to two persons, God and myself. God draws us away from things and all other creatures. He will settle all questions of destiny directly with the soul, apart from secondary laws or agents. It was not Jacob that wrestled with the angel primarily, but it was the God-man that wrestled with Jacob. Jacob's only path to victory was his complete subjugation by the Lord. All that long night the Son of God wrestled with every power of Jacob's nature, reducing all his energies of self-will, self-plan-

ning, self-desire, self-esteem, till his spiritual "bones were broken" (Ps. li. 8), and to cut the work short, he unjointed his sturdy limb and made him a limping picture of weakness. It is our strength that God must hew away in order to bless us. Isaiah says, "The lame take the prey." He who is perfectly conquered by the Lord, cannot be conquered by anything else, but if God does not conquer us, we are an easy prey to a thousand foes. The soul that is thoroughly subjugated by the Lord, will march or limp triumphantly through earth and sky, apparently as weak as an infant, but as invincible as gravitation.

4. *The innermost and uttermost confession of his being to God.* The Lord said, "What is thy name? And he said, Jacob." What a vast difference there is between confessing the mere actions, and confessing the inmost character of the being. In Hebrew literature, a name stands to represent the character of that which is named. Jacob signifies a *supplanter*: that was the original, inherent trend of his moral being, and for which he was no more responsible than for the color of his eyes; yet none the less must this inherent evil be fully confessed and purged away. The *outward act* of supplanting his brother had been confessed; and pardon for his sins granted at Bethel. This confession is fun-

damental ; he frankly opens the complexion and and core of his nature to God. This is the final step in his sacrifice of self, the expiring breath of the old nature.

V. Notice in the conclusion of this study, *Jacob's victorious blessing*.

1. His whole moral nature was purified. The changing of his name to "Israel," that is, a prince of God, implies, in the strongest manner, his complete cleansing from depravity. There is no hint in Scripture that any one can have the full baptism of the Spirit, and yet continue to have inbred sin remaining. It was no empty, earthly title *put on* Jacob, but a Divine verity *wrought in his soul*. He was, from that time, in reality, a prince of God. No one can be such as this title implies without inwrought holiness.

2. The enduement of power. "Thou hast power with God and with man, and hast prevailed." This gift of pure, Divine unction to a soul, is beyond all measurable and created force ; it is far beyond all science or comprehension of man ; it is entirely supernatural in its nature and operations ; it mocks all reasoning and defies intellectual investigation. It is like an investment on the soul, an atmosphere around the spirit, a fiery breath, a spiritual lightning, which ignores things great and wise, never works ac-

according to our forecasting, and brings most marvellous things to pass with utmost ease.

After Jacob is thoroughly crucified, how readily he can receive power from God! now that the dyke of self is swept away, the cataracts of heaven flow easily over him. With this mysterious power on his soul, he meets Esau, and that vindictive man weeps like a child, conquered by an unknown force (Gen. xxxiii. 4). In his subsequent marchings from place to place, a supernatural terror fell on the surrounding tribes, "so that they were afraid to pursue after Jacob" (Gen. xxxv. 5). Similar efforts often flow from the gift of power.

3. The vision of God. "He called the name of the place Peniel — that is, the face of God — for I have seen God face to face." Jacob had not, perhaps, fully recognized the strange Wrestler as the personal Jehovah, until after his purification; but in the light of that Divine day-break which filled his spiritual senses, he saw the lineaments of that countenance which fills heaven with joy. How the baptism of the Spirit liberates all the spiritual senses to discover the features and personality of Jesus!

4. An assurance of unlimited wealth. How can the soul fear poverty or want when filled with God! When Israel met Esau, he urged upon him a present, saying, "Take, I pray thee.

my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have all things " (margin). How this agrees with the post-Pentecostal epistle, "All things are yours!" The man whose original tendency was to overreach his brother, under the perfect transformation, finds the currents of his heart flowing out in royal blessing.

Bethel and Peniel, the kingdom and the face of God. Except we be converted we cannot enter the kingdom, and except we have pure hearts we cannot see the face of God.

CHAPTER X.

AT THE BURNING BUSH.

THERE is probably an infinite variety in the shadings of religious experience. Just as there are seven prime colors in the rainbow, yet these seven can be so combined as to produce an endless variety of colors and shades of color, so there are a few prime, staple facts or principles, which form all character and experience, whether good or evil, yet these few principles are so differently compounded in different persons as to produce an infinite diversity in the details of soul history; and it is safe to say that no two experiences, either in sin or holiness, have ever been duplicated; and yet in the leading principles there is a general similarity in all. In no one Scripture portrait can we find our exact reflection, yet by walking through this gallery of character and experience, we may find ourselves sufficiently delineated as to find our true moral stature and complexion. We shall find lessons and shadings of experience in Moses at the burning bush diversified from

Isaiah and Jacob, though composed of the same prime elements.

Without detaining ourselves too long, let us notice briefly the religious standing of Moses at the time he saw the burning bush.

We learn from the twelfth of Hebrews that Moses was truly converted before he left Egypt. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith, he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

In these verses we have summed up all the essential elements of justifying faith and genuine religion.

1. Acting upon his own responsibility.
2. Rejecting heathen honors.
3. Choosing affliction with God's people.
4. Renouncing the pleasures of sin.
5. Faith in a coming Christ.
6. Faith in future rewards and punishments.
7. Obeying God against an earthly king.
8. Apprehending invisible things.

This constellation of virtues entitled him,

even at that early age, to be enrolled among the heroes of faith. Then, after leaving Egypt, he sought the society of the godly and devout, uniting himself with the family of Jethro, who was a worshiper of the true God and the "priest of Midian." So that we may safely affirm that, at the time our lesson begins, Moses was the best and foremost servant of the Lord on earth.

The spiritual lessons to which I ask your attention, are found in the third and fourth chapters of Exodus.

1. "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush."

The person here referred to is no other than the Lord Jesus; he is afterwards called God, the Jehovah, the I AM. It may help the common reader to state here, that in reading the Old Testament, when the word Lord is spelled in capital letters, as "LORD," it is a translation of the word Jehovah, and corresponds with the person of the Lord Jesus, as the covenanting God of all grace; and when the Scriptures speak of *an* angel, they may refer to any celestial messenger, but the expression "*the* angel of the Lord," refers almost invariably to Christ, the angel of the covenant. Hence, in all those Divine manifestations made to patriarchs and prophets, Christ was revealing Himself accord

ing to the needs and circumstances of the time.

We have seen in a previous chapter that fire is an emblem of sanctification, and though Moses was a very eminent servant of God, we shall see farther on in the chapter that there were elements of hesitancy and disobedience lingering in his nature which needed to be destroyed by a consuming flame.

2. "And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight," from which we learn the lesson of taking time to wait on God, and giving attention to our own spiritual needs.

It is amazing in how many things Christian people will repeat the excuses about Christian perfection which sinners give against conversion. How difficult it is to persuade the Lord's servants to take time to seek the baptism of fire! For example: I once attended a holiness convention, where there were about twenty ministers in attendance, all of whom seemed partially interested in holiness; but none of them so much interested as Moses was, to let sheep-tending and all secondary matters alone long enough to wait for the anointing.

One had a little country appointment to fill, another had a sick person to visit, another had a church collection to work up, another had a Sunday-school essay to write, and so each one

had some little task (allowing no time to seek the sanctifying grace) which was all right in its place, but which, when brought in competition with the necessity of a clean heart and the baptism of power, was as small dust in the balance.

How easy it is for Satan to make us neglect the imperative duty of seeking holiness, under the guise of some other little duty, which may be really disobedience under a false veil! As people do not get converted in a hap-hazard way while paying attention to a hundred other little matters, neither do believers get fully sanctified by accident while running here and there absorbed in subordinate matters. The supreme duty of Moses was to turn aside and pay attention to the burning bush, laying aside for a while the care of the sheep and all earthly interests.

When Jesus told the hundred and twenty to tarry in the upper room for the Holy Ghost, it would have been a positive sin for them to have gone running around Jerusalem, even though they were visiting the sick and feeding the hungry.

The doing of one good work can never atone for not doing the supreme duty of the hour.

**“Take time to be holy,
No longer delay,
The time passeth quickly,
Come now while 'tis day.**

“Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with the Lord,
Abide in Him always
And feed on His Word.

“Take time to be holy,
The world rushes on,
Spend much time in secret,
With Jesus alone.”

No time is lost in a journey, by stopping for prayer and provender. No real duties are ever neglected by stopping to get filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. “Behold the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed.”

It is evident that this burning bush was a type of what God wanted Moses to be. Just as the flame pervaded the bush without withering its leaves, or in any wise damaging its natural functions, so God designed that the whole being of Moses should be aflame with the supernatural presence of the Holy Ghost, without infringing upon his free agency and without destroying any of the legitimate functions and faculties of his being. The question is often asked, What will the baptism of the Holy Ghost eliminate from human nature? The true Scriptural answer is, Sin, and nothing but sin. Some have imagined that if all sinful tempers and desires are removed, it involves the partial

destruction of human nature. No, it simply involves the destruction of sin from human nature. When it is preached that the Holy Ghost can destroy the mental taste for light, trashy literature, or for mere speculative philosophy, it does not involve the changing of the constitution of the mind, but simply the purging out from the mind vitiated and false tastes.

When we insist that the Holy Spirit can destroy the desire for alcohol, opium and tobacco, it is thought by some that it involves the upsetting of the physical economy of man. But no ; it simply involves the destruction of abnormal appetites, and cravings for those things which are positively against the normal constitution of man's body. All those appetites and faculties which God appointed to the body and mind, will not be destroyed by any degree of holiness. To teach otherwise St. Paul characterizes as the doctrine of devils (1 Tim. iv. 1, 3). But those appetencies which have been wrought in man by the work of the devil, God has promised to destroy. The flame of fire did not change the original constitution of the bush or turn it into another species of tree, or straighten the limbs into mathematical lines. The full baptism of the Holy Spirit cleanses away all sin from the believer and fills him with the love of God, without deranging in the least the original

constitution of either body, mind, or spirit; without turning the believer into any other species of being; without changing his capabilities into those of any other person; without necessarily straightening his peculiarities and idiosyncrasies into ideal and prim proportions. There are a multitude of defects attaching even to the holy ones; defects resulting from a thousand complex causes; some from heredity, some from race, some from education, some from previous sinful habits, some from defective faculties, and many other causes, so blended that none but God, the infinite searcher of hearts, can unweave the tangled skein, and weigh and judge all the details of a Christian's life in thought and action.

We may be no giant Mariposa towering aloft over the centuries, no poetical palm, no cedar of Lebanon, dressed in perennial green, but only an acacia shrub growing on a stony mountain side, in ourselves the poorest, and weakest, and most despised things, loaded with manifold infirmities; and yet be so cleansed from sin, so pervaded with the pure love of Jesus, so filled with celestial flame, that intelligences, higher and better than we are, may pause to wonder at the mystery of such weak things being the residence of such glory. Pure love is a flame that burns without consuming the soul.

Now let us notice how God draws his servant into such an attitude as to turn him into a spiritual burning bush.

4. "And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said Moses, Moses." I have noticed in previous chapters this item of God's personal call to holiness. We are not justified or sanctified in a collective mass, but God deals with us in our separate, individual character. "And Moses said, Here am I." All through the Word of God, all ultimate questions of salvation and destiny, are brought down to a fine point and settled between the "I AM" of God, and the "Here am I" of man.

"And the Lord said, Put off thy shoes" — or sandals — "from off thy feet." The shoe separates us from that whereon we stand. It may be made a weight and a hindrance to the most rapid motion. The priests were to put off their shoes when they entered the holy places in the tabernacle. When Joshua entered the land of Canaan, and met the God-man in the plain of Jericho, he was commanded to put off his shoes, for the ground whereon he stood was holy.

Whatever hinders us from standing on the simple Word of God, from immediate contact with the promise and the Promiser, is to be put off. "For the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Many persons seem very much confused as to the difference between *imputed* and *imparted* holiness. I think the demarkation is illustrated at the burning bush. The inanimate and impersonal ground was holy by imputation, being used for the time being as the Divine sanctuary, the place for cleansing; yet neither Scripture nor common reason teach us that holiness resided in the earth. Canaan is called the holy land; the temple was called holy, only because designed for the use of a holy God and a holy people.

The holiness to which God called Moses was very different in character from this official and imputed kind. His was to be a holiness wrought into his heart and will by the Holy Ghost, and the same in kind with the holiness of God. To teach, as some do, that the holiness to which God calls believers is no higher in kind than the ceremonial holiness of the furniture of the tabernacle, betrays great ignorance of moral distinctions and Scripture teaching. Inanimate things can only be holy by imputation, as they are absolutely destitute of moral quality; for an opposite reason, intelligent, volitional, and immortal spirits can be holy only by impartation, for moral character is as essential to a spiritual being as it is impossible to an inanimate object.

“Come, now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people out of Egypt.” There are two things in this Divine call: first, the call to personal holiness; and second, the mission assigned to him under the baptism of fire. This order should never be reversed, though it often is. How many there are, running hither and thither, attempting herculean things for God — the deliverance of a race, or the shattering of the kingdom of Satan — who have never taken time to take off their shoes before God, or to be filled with His spirit. Hence the enormous waste of mere human zeal, with so little Divine and abiding fruit. Jesus gave his disciples two words, which form the key of the Church’s mission: one is the word *tarry*; the other is the word *go*. “Go preach my Gospel, but tarry till ye be endued.”

Go, but *tarry*; these are the negative and positive poles of that battery which is to shock the moral world. It is rebellion to accept one of these words and reject the other. It is treason against the Holy Ghost to *go* before we are *fired*.

5. Let us now examine the items in the entire consecration of Moses, or rather the points upon which his perfect obedience hinged. “And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh”?

The first difficulty which he saw was his own littleness and inability for such a great work. Humility is essential to all true greatness and usefulness, but when it seems to stand in our way of yielding prompt and courageous obedience, then it is not humility. Nothing can be more subtle and deceitful than depravity. It will assume a thousand forms and hues; it will mask itself under the guise of all the Christian graces; and under the plea of humility, it will conceal the pride of Lucifer; under the plea of weakness, it will hide great self-dependence; it is so swift and treacherous that none but God can search it out in its ultimate lurking places, and by the touch-stone of appropriate tests, like the touch of Ithuriel's spear, make it show its true nature. Moses was sincere and truly humble, and he could apprehend the greatness of the work set before him, and I cannot detect any pride under his plea of inefficiency; but he was looking at his nothingness apart from God's Almightyness, hence the Divine answer, "Certainly I will be with thee." The "I" of Moses was but a cipher, but the "I" of God multiplied the cipher into efficiency equal to the task. The very bush upon which Moses was gazing, was a weak shrub and had no strength as compared to forest trees, yet when aflame with Jehovah's presence, it became the instrument of

power such as all the forests of earth have never equalled. In how many different ways must we learn that God's strength is made perfect in man's weakness!

After the question of ability was settled, the next difficulty was as to the nature of his message and his authority for this mission.

"And Moses said, when I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?"

This question refers to a lack of wisdom, as the previous question referred to a lack of strength. When we come to look at the work of God in its true light, we find that it lies entirely beyond the range of human wit and skill. It is a supernatural work, mingling, it is true, with the human, but to be carried on by supernatural principles and a simplicity of wisdom beyond the mere human mind. See how the answer of God exactly corresponds to this second difficulty! "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." I have not time here to elaborate all the suggestions in this answer; the general thought is this, that God is an eternal, independent, self-existent Being; that He is

always present with His servants; that the infinite resources of His power, wisdom, and love, are at His command any instant of duration; and being always present with His servants, these resources are available for them under any emergency and at any moment. This was just the truth that would meet the difficulty in the mind of Moses: "What shall I say unto them?" It is one thing for us to learn this Divine name of "I AM" intellectually, and quite a different thing to learn it spiritually.

To learn this name truly, is to so apprehend and practice the Divine presence, as to live with God a moment at a time, drawing from Him wisdom and strength for the needs of the hour, without relying on past successes, or flinching from future difficulties. There is an enormous Gospel set forth in this very name of I AM. The next difficulty to be overcome was the apprehended unbelief of the Israelites.

"And Moses answered and said, But behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice." How anxious we are by nature that people should have faith *in us*, and believe *our* words! Other people may be discredited, but it is so humiliating that what *we* say should not pass for full value. How hard to the natural mind to take contradiction, to have our testimony disputed! There is often a subtle pride, a secret

self-esteem, a secret desire to have people believe *us* more than to have them believe God.

But we are not really in a condition to be perfect witnesses for Christ, until all this spirit is purged from us, until we are sublimely indifferent whether people take our words or not, so they will only take the words of God. When the interest in our reputation is entirely lost in being interested for Christ's reputation, when anxiety about the acceptance of our words is swallowed in the desire for having Christ's words accepted, we can then be the conductors of such truth as will draw people to Christ, instead of to ourselves, and ground their faith in His words, and not in our mere say so.

This is just the manner in which God answered Moses' third difficulty. "And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it."

Let us remember that up to this time there were no written Scriptures. God embodied His word and revelations in individual patriarchs and prophetic teachers. The rod or shepherd's crook, which Moses had with him, was selected by the Lord as an emblem of His Word, by which miracles and mighty wonders were to be

wrought. The history of this rod in connection with the ten plagues, the dividing of the Red Sea, the coming together again of the waters, and the smiting of the rock in the wilderness, is familiar to all. From this time on in the history of the Hebrew people, the rod was a type of the Word of God; it was in allusion to this that David said, "Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." While the rod was in the hand of Moses, it was a lifeless stick; but when, in obedience to God he cast it on the ground, it became a living thing. In like manner, the Word of God as a mere letter, held in the grasp of human reason, is lifeless; but when under a Divine commission, cast forth upon human hearts, it becomes a living truth, "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The rod became a terror even to Moses himself. The Word of God is greater than the man who preaches it, and many a faithful minister has felt a *sacred terror* at the very Divine message which he was casting forth.

This, then, was to be the thing that should convince the unbelievers, and so it is to this day. It is our place to cast forth the words of God, in their purity, and they will prove their own divinity.

If people will not believe *us*, let us give them the *living Word*. It is our place to obey; it is God's place to take care of our reputation.

The next difficulty was the overcoming of a natural infirmity. "And Moses said unto the Lord, I am not eloquent, but I am slow of speech, and have a slow tongue."

How natural it was for Moses to think that eloquence and swiftness of speech were requisite to such a mission, when the fact was, it was not the quantity but the quality of words which were essential. He did not then understand how that God could turn his infirmity into an advantage by giving him an opportunity to think twice before speaking once, and making his words the more wise and weighty when uttered. What multitudes there are yet, who think they cannot be free from sin, and yield perfect heart loyalty to God, because of some natural infirmity.

"And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

Surely this Scripture ought to be a panacea for all who are stumbling over their infirmities. A slow tongue, with God in it, is better than

eloquence ; a deaf ear, with the Holy Ghost, will hear profoundest things ; a blind man, with God, will walk straighter than they who have eyes without Him. God does not say in this passage that he will remove the infirmity, but something far better, *He will unite Himself with the infirmity*, saying, "I will be with thy mouth."

We must let God take us continually, just as we are, infirmities and all, and if He will condescend to unite the unction and energy of the Holy Ghost with our infirmities, let us patiently bear them ; nay, like Paul, even glory in them, that the power of Christ may rest upon us.

Notwithstanding God's giving a complete answer to all his objections, Moses yet shrank from obedience. The last citadel into which old self had retreated needed yet to be exploded. "And Moses said, O my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send." In other words, send by anybody except me. He had no more rational excuses to offer.

Depravity is something that can never be reasoned out of the human heart ; every objection may be answered, every difficulty may be fairly met, and yet the old self-life will hide and shirk and retreat to the last cell of nature ; but if depravity will not be reasoned out, it must be burned out, slain, crucified without mercy ; and so we read, "The anger of the Lord was kindled

against Moses." God loved Moses, but His wrath burned against the carnal mind that was in Moses.

Under this indignation from the Lord, the last vestige of Moses' nature yielded to God. The very wrath of God against our depravity turns out to be His intense love for us. "And Moses went and returned unto Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt." Notice how the whole current of his heart now flowed out in obedience.

He does not say I *must* go into Egypt, but "*let me go*, I pray thee," as if a portion of God's love and sympathy for the poor Israelites had been transferred to his own heart, and as if suffering and toiling to deliver them would now be the highest joy of his life. The very thing he shrank from, he now prays for the privilege of doing. How often this is the case with believers who, under the full baptism of the Holy Spirit, do things gladly which they had thought both impossible and impracticable.

In concluding this chapter, let me call your attention to a very severe and delicate test, to which Moses was subjected soon after receiving the baptism of the Spirit.

The whole story is not written out in detail, but enough is stated to give us a clue to all the

particulars. The account will be found in Exodus iv. 24-26. He had married into a family which worshiped the true God, but were Gentiles and not under the covenant of circumcision. The sons that had been born to Moses had not been circumcised, and on his way to Egypt he understood it to be God's will to circumcise his sons. To this his wife Zipporah stoutly objected. Here was a delicate trial involving either disobedience to God or a temporary disruption of domestic love and harmony.

We know not the details of the dispute between Moses and his wife on this subject, but it seems that in some way he was about to compromise or postpone the duty, and we read that "It came to pass by the way in the inn that the Lord met him and sought to kill him." This may sound like strange and very severe language toward the man who had been so highly honored and blest of God. Yet there is in it a great principle. The nearer we get to God, the more heinous the principle of disobedience becomes. It was a question of whether he would obey God, or yield to the prejudices of his wife, when to have yielded to the latter would have been practical rebellion to Jehovah. When Moses saw the seriousness of the situation, having within him the principle of perfect heart obedience, he decided to obey God at any cost.

His wife was very much enraged at her husband's invincible conformity to the Jewish covenant. "Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So the Lord let him go, then his wife said, A bloody husband art thou because of the circumcision."

Moses had the favor of God, though he had to endure the petty and temporary anger of his wife.

Here is a lesson for all who are fully sanctified. The circumstances of the trial may be infinitely varied, but we may rest assured that there will come some test to the principle of perfect love and obedience. It may come from good people, from relatives, from those we dearly love; it may come from a quarter we least anticipated; it may test us to the quick; in a manner very delicate and severe, it may be such a test that no other one will know just how to sympathize with us; it may be a test which would be nothing to other people, but very great to us. God will select the test with infinite skill, and have it so applied to us as to prove our heart loyalty to Him to the very core. God is our all and in all; our happiness and well-being for both worlds is entirely from Him. If we set Him foremost in all things, and make

conformity to His will the chief business of our lives, and obey and trust Him come what may, He has pledged His infinite goodness to make all things work together for our good. The highest and easiest service we can render to God, is to serve Him for His own sake, for the very love we bear Him. Love gets the highest rewards, yet it seeks no reward except to serve with a greater love.

THE SECRET
OF
SPIRITUAL POWER.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER

A GREAT deal has been said and written upon the subject of spiritual power, and perhaps I can add nothing original upon the subject, but may help to stir up some pure minds by way of remembrance.

While attending a holiness convention in Star Hall, Manchester, England, one day, there opened up to my mind a series of thoughts as to the secret of God's power in man. In the first place, the secret of spiritual power consists in the union of the Holy Ghost with the purified faculties and natural energies of the human soul, and, on the human side, it consists in the utter abandonment of the soul to, and a hearty co-operation with the Holy Spirit. It is not eloquence, nor style, nor personal magnetism, nor psychology, nor the natural energy of the human soul, not even the energy of a purified soul. The soul may be purified, and yet as a mere creature, the creature faculties and creature powers do not have the power of God in

soul-saving, in aggressive spiritual work, in bringing sinners to repentance, or believers into holiness. It is true that a human soul free from sin, as a mere creature, has a marvelous power above other unsaved souls, but as a creature, though it be holy, yet in itself does not possess that secret energy which can communicate conviction and lead to salvation. So that, however holy a man is, there must be joined on to him a divine current, a supernatural energy which is emphatically divine, and of which he is the vehicle and conductor.

This divine power is a secret unknown to the world, uncomprehended by the most learned sinners, misunderstood by carnal professors, utterly beyond the grasp of philosophers or scientists. Let us notice some Scripture proofs. Jesus had a pure soul; from the very initial of His being He was perfectly free from the fallen nature of Adam, and, as a mere man, He was superior in moral strength to all the men of the world. And yet it was not by His holy creature-strength that He did the works of His father. The power that Jesus used in working miracles, in preaching sermons, in healing diseases, in casting out demons, in saving souls was not the power of His sinless soul, but it was the power flowing from the baptism of the Spirit upon His pure humanity. This is distinctly marked in

the two periods of His life. From His infancy to His baptism in Jordan He was entirely holy, but wrought no miracles, but when the Holy Ghost descended on Him, from that time on, He was the Anointed One, and worked under the perpetual unction that flowed through Him from the Holy Spirit. So that in addition to His holy creature-faculties, God poured into Him the fullness of the Spirit. We are told that when Jesus had gotten through with the temptation of the wilderness, He "returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Ghost." This expression of returning in the "power of the Holy Ghost," implies that there was added unto Him a power which He did not possess as a mere pure man.

We sometimes hear it said that "holiness is power," and that all the power we need for the work of God is heart purity, but these remarks are not entirely correct according to the Word of God. It is true that heart purity is power in the creature sense of power, but it is not the power of the Holy Ghost in the Scripture sense of it. Jesus is our example, and we read that He received in addition to His pure humanity the power of the Holy Ghost, and that it was "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot unto God," and that it was "through the Holy Ghost He gave command-

ment unto the apostles." And He so often affirms, "The words I speak unto you I speak not of myself," that is, the words did not proceed from His merely pure humanity. Now, if Jesus needed the Holy Ghost united with His holy creature nature in order to give Him the peculiar secret of power in His mission, and if He is our example, how much more do we need that we should have our sanctified hearts and our mental faculties in vital union with the Holy Spirit, that by that union we may do the work of God. So that we cannot depend on the natural energies even of our saved souls. We cannot depend on ourselves in any form, nor on any creature, or number of creatures however holy they may be.

Another proof text is, Jesus says, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you." The old version says, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you." But it is more correct to take the marginal reading. According to the thought in the old version, the power is a something which is detached from the Holy Ghost, but according to the margin, the power is identified with the Holy Ghost, and is spoken of as a current or wave which gushes out from the conjunction of the Holy Spirit and the human soul. Just as the current of water in the

wilderness did not gush from the rock of itself, nor did it gush from the rod, but when the rod touched the rock, from the union of the rod and the rock, the stream poured forth, so the current of divine power does not go forth from the Holy Ghost apart from the human soul, nor does it proceed from the merely purified soul, but when the sanctified soul and the Holy Ghost are united, from that ineffable union there goes forth what is scripturally called the power of God. Thus the secret of power is in having the Holy Ghost unite Himself to our souls, cleansing, filling, inspiring us, supplying us according to each emergency with supernatural light, energy, wisdom, courage, tact and zeal, to do the will and work of God. This power is something that God puts within the soul, which the soul itself does not comprehend, so that a person under its enduement does not break down with discouragement, does not break down under a thousand things that would break down the human soul if it were left by itself.

One of the best illustrations of this secret power is a current of electricity, of which the sanctified faculties of man form the negative pole, and the Holy Ghost the positive. If these are separated there is no current, but united there goes forth a shock to startle the

slumbering, to awaken sinners, to cause the hearers to break down in penitential weeping, to reveal to Christian people as by a flash of lightning the original impurity in their hearts, and to move congregations toward the Saviour with earnest cries for salvation. The scarcity of these celestial shocks is because professedly Christian workers trust to creature strength, or to the mere orthodoxy of their words. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man," and especially cursed is he that trusteth in himself.

CHAPTER II.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER.

ANOTHER condition essential to the full enduement of spiritual power is the *crucifixion of self* in order that we may be united with the Holy Ghost. God cannot fill us with His Spirit, illuminate us, empower us with courage and boldness, and that intuitive and divine insight and energy until we are first crucified. We must first die before we live; we must reach the point of our own utter inherent foolishness in order to receive the wisdom from above; we must reach the consciousness of our own indescribable weakness in order to join on to God's power. His strength is made perfect at the point where our weakness is perfect.

In the account in Genesis, where God met Jacob at Peniel and wrestled with him, Jacob's prayer prevailed at the very point where he was utterly conquered. We hear it said that Jacob wrestled with the angel, but the Word tells us, "There wrestled a man with Jacob."

Let us remember that this wrestling was not with a convicted sinner, for Jacob had entered the family of God twenty years before at Bethel, but it was the conflict between the perfect will of God and the original perversity of Jacob's nature. At first Jacob thought he was wrestling with a mere man, but he had not wrestled long before he discovered that the man was an angel, and, a little later, this angel assumed the proportions of the Prince of the Angels and, before the conflict ended, he found it was God Himself. So that what seemed a mere man at the beginning turned out in the end to be the Jehovah Elohim, the Lord Almighty, who was no less a personage than the Lord Jesus.

How often this is illustrated in our experience. God comes to us in disguise, and seeks to conquer us at unexpected points and in unexpected ways, wrestling with us in the humble armor of some petty circumstance or person, hiding His infinite majesty under such little cheap apparel that we never dream it is God till we are conquered and the mist falls from our vision, and, like Jacob, we are amazed to find ourselves "face to face with God." The Lord wrestled with Jacob in order to perfectly break down all the hidden resistance within him to the Holy Ghost, all the latent resistance

to God's will and love. And when he found that the wrestling was hard and delayed, he touched the hollow of his thigh and put it out of joint.

Here is another suggestion for us. Jacob was a strong man physically, and a good walker with his strongly built constitution, and as the thigh joint is the locality of strength, especially in wrestling, in long marching and in lifting or bearing heavy burdens, the Lord broke him down at the very point where he was strong, and in that very joint which he would likely boast of or depend on. And when that point was touched, and he was crucified in the last reserve and main dependence of his energy so that he had to limp as a frail thing, then the Holy Ghost flowed in and filled his being. Thus his utter helplessness became the most fitting condition of his union with the Holy Spirit, so that he limped in his body but leaped in his soul. Now, the same thing takes place in us. In order that we may receive the strength of God, the secret of power, God wrestles with us, and the wrestling must go on until He breaks down in us all resistance to His will, not only all open resistance, or known and conscious resistance, but all the hidden and unsuspected resistance that lies in our fibre or feelings, or faculties; that subtle stubbornness

of nature which the delicate nature of God can see and feel, but which we do not perceive. And He must break us down at the very point where we are strongest, where our energy is lodged, be that in head or hand or heart, be that in our mind or management or money, be that in our education or prejudice or desires or affections, in whatever point of our being we may fancy we are the best, in whatever locality there is stored up the most of self, there is where the finger of God must put the knife, there is where the last resistance must expire in order that the Holy Spirit may unite us with Himself and make us partakers with the Holy Ghost.

Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." All through the Word of God we find that crucifixion precedes deep spiritual power. Not only must God break down the sins of a sinner in order to convert him, but in those who are truly regenerated He must needs break down their wisdom, learning, prudence, their pet views, their churchly training and prejudice, their narrow-mindedness, their knowledge, their righteousness. It takes the Lord just about as long to break down a Christian man's righteousness as to break down a sinner's unrighteousness. Do not understand me that God ever breaks down His own wisdom

or righteousness or strength, but He breaks down that form of wisdom, righteousness and strength which sprouts and grows out of human nature. Whatever originates in self, in the creature nature, must be crucified in order that the creature may be wedded to Christ through the Holy Ghost, and from that sacred union derive other wisdom, righteousness and strength infinitely superior to that of any creature. We are to let go not only our wicked selves, but, also our seemingly pious selves in order that we may take hold of God. The self-life at any point is like attaching a conductor to a telegraph wire which diverts the electric message and runs it into the ground. It is only the insulated wire through which man can pour his intelligence through the electric current, so it is the crucified and insulated soul through which God can pour His unmixed truth, and upon which He can place the secret unction of holy power.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER.

ANOTHER secret of spiritual power lies in the perpetual ignoring of our creature ability. I do not say a perpetual denying of our ability. Telling an untruth never helps God any, whether it be against ourselves or against Satan, and if we represent ourselves as being nothing in the absolute sense of that word it is un-Scriptural.

But I say that the secret of power lies in the constant ignoring of our creature ability as a sufficiency of success. In the realm of creaturehood, our natural ability is something, but in the realm of divine grace, where spiritual miracles are to be wrought, we can be efficient in the hands of God by a most perfect ignoring of our sufficiency. It is in this sense we find all those Scripture expressions about being "dust and ashes," being a "broken vessel," "the lame taking the prey," and being less than the least, "being nothing," "taking the

weak things, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are."

We are to put ourselves in the hands of God without relying on our powers. We are to abandon ourselves to the uttermost to the Spirit of God, and, at the same time, utterly ignore any strength or wisdom or goodness that belong to us as creatures.

Let me give you a sample. Joseph was wonderfully sanctified in prison. We are told in the Psalms that while he was in prison "the Word of the Lord tried him," it so tried, proved, tested him as to lead him through a perfect crucifixion. When Pharaoh sent for him they made haste and shaved him and changed his prison raiment and rushed him in speedily before the king. The king said, "I have heard you have wisdom and can interpret dreams." In Joseph's reply to the king there is brought out this secret of power. He said to the king, "It is not in me." This was the negative pole to the current. While his natural faculties and talents were far above the majority of his fellows, yet he knew that the interpretation of the king's dream was a divine secret for a divine purpose, and lay beyond the region of any uninspired human mind. Hence the perfect renunciation of his own ability. Then he said, "But God will give Pharaoh an

answer." What a world of meaning there is in that expression, "But God!" And then leaning back on the Holy Spirit in self-renunciation, in utter abandonment to the divine will, God put into his heart and mind the interpretation. And so he gave the interpretation as God gave it to him. He did not know the interpretation of it in prison, but he got the interpretation right there on the spot, and God poured a stream of light and discernment through that man because he had died to creature-wisdom, and his whole being was in such an attitude of dependence that God could prompt him to speak. He was not a battery, but the wire that conveyed the current. And when he finished the interpretation the king said, "The Spirit of God is in Joseph." That heathen king saw a divine light and power in that poor prisoner which surpassed all the wise men of Egypt.

There you have the secret of power, a power that convinced a heathen king, a power that so pierced through his heathen nature and caused him to adapt the plans of an ex-convict, and thereby immortalize his name forever.

We may also take the case of the apostles, when through them was healed the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple. The people looked upon Peter and John as demigods, and

Peter said, "Why do you look upon us, as if by our holiness we had made this man well, it is by the name of Jesus, through faith in His Name, this man has been made whole as you see."

All through the Word of God, the secret of power is to "trust in the Lord with all our heart, and to lean not to our own understanding." *Mark* it is not merely not to depend on our understanding, but not even to *lean* or *incline* towards it. We are so apt to lean on our experience as if wisdom and unction were accumulated forces stored up in our faculties. Because a man has been preaching several years he is apt to lean upon his old sermons and old plans, and because we have been in the Lord's work for some time, we are apt to lean upon our methods.

True, there is a sense in which we acquire wisdom and facility and fluency. The man who is constantly at work for God, preaching, exhorting and teaching, does acquire experience, and becomes skilled in the exercise of his gifts, and in discriminating the fitness of times and things, and even from the creature standpoint the skillful use of gifts and doctrine amounts to a good deal.

But I am now talking about the secret of divine power, not the secret of creature power.

The secret of divine power is, that with all our learning and skill and experience, we are never to bank on it, never draw a check on it for success, but view it all about in the same way as the dust out of which God made man's body.

If we desire to be workers for God, and keep in the power, we must walk along this path of ignoring creature ability and depending every time, as at the beginning, for the gift of the Spirit.

Oh, if we could only recollect ourselves. Recollect we are nothing, that we are empty and weak; recollect our attitude toward God and His work. God gives us unction not as a reservoir, but as a stream; not as a fountain, but as a current; not as a battery, but as a transmission. In a reservoir the water is dammed up, but in a channel the water is in perpetual flow. And so fully sanctified souls acting under the power of the Holy Ghost, are more like a telegraph wire along which the lightning can flash at any time, and not like a battery of stored-up electricity. Many a Christian worker has lost the power by unintentionally regarding himself as a reservoir.

We are to keep at the point of self-nothingness, and at the same time look to God alone for sufficiency just as truly as we take the sunshine from the sun today and do not think of using the sunshine of yesterday.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER

A NOTHER secret of divine power consists in using only the appropriate truth which is requisite for the salvation of souls. The Holy Ghost works through the truth, and whether He convicts for sin, or regenerates, or sanctifies, or empowers, or imparts special comfort or wisdom, He uses that part of doctrine or truth which is especially adapted for the purpose. All truth is not saving truth, even all Scripture truth is not saving truth. All Scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable, but it is not necessarily all profitable in the same direction. The Holy Ghost in saving people uses the truth especially designed to that end.

The truth of man's fall, human depravity and need, the incarnation of the Son of God, vicarious atonement, the personality and agency of the Holy Ghost, the resurrection of the dead, heaven and hell, rewards and punishments, these are the staple, soul-saving truths. All of

these truths are interwoven throughout the Scriptures in history, parable, miracle, prophecy, command, promise, example and poetry in a thousand shades and forms, so that in almost any chapter of the Bible there are enough of these truths to furnish the Holy Spirit material for conviction and salvation.

But even Scripture truth can be handled in such a way as to render it of no effect. It can be so generalized, or made to serve a merely poetical or intellectual or sentimental purpose which is nothing else than handling the Word of God deceitfully.

There are certain elements that do not conduct electricity. If you were to make your telegraph wire of glass, you would never get a message through it. It is pretty and nice and brilliant, far handsomer than iron, but it does not convey lightning. And just so there are certain truths in nature, philosophy, history, and a certain way of shaping even Scripture truth as to turn it into a glass wire, beautiful, bright, crystal truths, but along which there runs no piercing conviction, no flash of holy light, no sin-consuming fire. It is true that salvation is wrought by an act of God, but that action of the Spirit is always through the instrumentality of appropriate truth, just as the act of a soldier in battle is through some

chosen weapon. Man's fall and depravity produces the need of salvation, the death of Jesus the procuring cause of salvation, the Word of God the *instrument* of salvation, the Holy Ghost the *executive agent* of salvation, eternity with its heaven or hell the *motives* to salvation, and faith the *condition* of salvation. These are the columnar truths in the temple of redemption. Knock any of these columns away and, like another blind Sampson, sooner or later the whole fabric of revealed truth will be perverted and tumble down in infinite calamity upon your soul.

There are many preachers and religious teachers who hold some of these truths very feebly or not at all, but such havoc they do make. Their work is very superficial and transitory, they produce fanaticisms or wild fire, or else dead, cold formalism, or else a light-headed and vain sort of religion. There are many religious teachers, some of them brilliant, preaching on mere morality, on socialism, on politics, on questions of labor and capital, on the "higher criticism," on railroad accidents, on little recent events, on anything and everything except those great giant truths that break down the soul, enrage Satan, gladden heaven, and disclose both the secrets of the human heart and the destinies of eternity.

The Holy Ghost will honor those who honor Him, and He will honor those truths which He has chosen as the conductors of His power.

Our wisdom consists in implicit conforming to God's plan, and putting ourselves right in line with the chosen order of God.

A plain farmer, or lumberman, or converted drunkard, or plowboy who is unskilled, from the creature standpoint, but who, by entire abandonment to God, passes himself over into the region of the supernatural and, in perfect simplicity of spirit, handles the supernatural weapons of truth, will be in contact with the infinite battery of holy power, and slay giants in sin, save and build up souls and transform a community as a whole regiment of philosophers could not do.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER

IN ORDER to have the abiding secret of power we must consent to seeming failure for Jesus. I do not know how that thought may strike you, but if you will look at the crisis events in the Bible, and into the lives of people of great faith, you will find over and over again that the sweep of power turned on the pivot of a perfect willingness to fail utterly in the eye of the world. Those who work with God cannot be failures, but there are times when from our standpoint and feeling everything seems to fail utterly, and our quiet acquiescence in such apparent failure for Jesus' sake, while it closes the valve on the creature side, opens the divine side for the inflow of the energy that moves the universe. It is very easy for even sanctified souls to become attached to their work and to want it to succeed as *their* work. It is so easy for devoted persons running camp meetings, conventions, faith homes, missions, or any kind of philanthropic or spiritual enter-

prise, to become greatly attached to the enterprise itself, and to have an overweening desire for success. But a close analysis of the heart will often reveal the fact that the craving for success is because we are putting ourselves into the affair, and the Holy Ghost who searches all things, finds out the terrible secret that after all it is self that wants success. Now, in order that God may get all the glory, He must blister the fair face of seeming success, make us die to ourselves in our work, and then He can accomplish results greater than we dream. Jesus does not want us to get wedded to His work instead of to Him. We are so frail even after we are sanctified, and although our depravity is purged away, all our faculties are so weak, that God must keep our wings clipped or we would fly over the bounds. A great many do jump the track. The man that never feels he has anything to boast of in his work, but always looks at the work as being nothing to his credit, is the one who is always at the point where he is willing to be counted a failure in the eyes of men. Read the record of great faith enterprises, such as under Luther, or Wesley, or George Muller's Orphanage, or Dr. Cullis' Consumptives' Home, or Bishop Taylor's work in India and Africa, and see how thousands of times in these men's lives they had to

consent to eternal failure in the eyes, not only of the world, but in the eyes of philosophers, churches, ministers and renowned ecclesiastics. Note their solitary struggles in prayer, their solitary mountain-peak convictions, the lofty possibilities they saw that no one else could see. See how they surpassed all the law makers in their law, outstripped college professors in their teaching, eclipsed earthly bankers in their handling of money, how they put to shame the idleness, shiftlessness and unbelief of the majority of nominal Christians around them, and in order to achieve such great results, they had constantly to lie in the dust, to bear criticism, coldness and contempt from those from whom they expected help. And over and over again, in their hearts, had to say "Amen," to perfect failure. Let me give you a Scripture sample or two. Esther was told by Mordecai to do a certain daring thing to save the Jews. She said, "If I do this it may involve my death," but sent back word that she would comply with his terms, hazard her life, "and if I perish I perish." That heart agreement to perish, to die and be buried in disgrace, was the key that unlocked the prison door, that let a whole nation out into liberty. There was the secret of power. When the great monarch of Babylon rebuked the three Hebrews for not worshipping,

his image, they responded, "Be it known unto you that we shall not bow down to your image, the God that we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, but if not, we will not bow down to your image." The secret of power lay in that expression "but if not." If we live by faith and walk with God, there will be many times in our lives when similar tests will confront us, and similar furnaces blaze for our destruction, and to go through unscorched, we must carry that great "but if not" in our hearts. The real value of any work we do for God, can often be measured by the amount of difficulties in the way of doing it, or ^el by the effort Satan makes to destroy it after it is done.

In the book of Revelation, Satan stood to devour the man child as soon as He was born. This is true of every work of God. If you receive a great blessing from the Holy Ghost, Satan will soon try to destroy or pervert it. If there be a glorious camp meeting or convention or revival, Satan will find human tools often-times within the church, to blast or check the gracious work if possible. In such seasons, the true servant of God must consent to the seeming failure of his labors, and at the same time go right on working, and commit the work to the absolute care of God.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER.

THE concluding thought in connection with the secret of power is, we must constantly recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit. There is a marvelous secret of strength in recollecting the divine presence in us and in the work God calls us to. "Moses endured as seeing Him who was invisible." "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." The saints in the middle ages looked upon holiness as "the practice of the divine presence." Every time we go into a meeting or speak to a soul or pray or sing or work for God, if then and there we recognize the Holy Spirit as in us and with us, it will not only be the source of our inspiration, but it will be the act of faith which God honors with success. I do not say we are not to pray for the presence of the Holy Ghost, or for Him to fall upon us and the Word, but that, having prayed in the name of Jesus, we are to recognize the prayer as answered. The Holy Ghost always accompanies

His own Word. In every meeting for the purpose of salvation or spiritual edification, the Holy Spirit is invariably on hand. David said the Lord *prevented* him with His goodness. The word "prevent" originally meant to run before, just as Elijah ran before Ahab when there was going to be a plentiful rain, so the Holy Spirit runs before us preceding every copious work of grace. Jesus says, "Where two or three are met together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Not, He will be there, but He is there, waiting to meet them. The Holy Spirit is in the church before we get there, in the pulpit waiting for us, in every human soul before we speak to it, and the secret of power is, to thoughtfully, trustfully, unwaveringly recognize Him there. When Jacob was converted at Bethel he said, "God is in this place and I knew it not." Twenty years after, when he had power to prevail with God, he recognized the Almighty in the form of a man, and went forth with an enduement which melted his hardened brother into tears. The Holy Ghost always moves through appropriate conductors, of which there are only two; namely, a *truth* or a *personality*. He *never* works except through some truth or some person. If we use the truth according to His will, and fully yield our person to Him we are

then to recognize Him in the use of these two agencies.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come." The bride is God's spiritual church. The Holy Ghost says "Come," and the Pentecostal church says "Come," but you notice the Holy Spirit gets His invitation in ahead of the church. And when you go to a sinner and say "Come to God," the Spirit has been there ahead of you, and is there to sanction your invitation.

The Spirit has gone to every child of humanity. I do not know just what the Spirit is doing, but it is my place to recognize His presence. In every assembly where the pure Gospel is preached, there is some susceptible case. Some sinner susceptible to conviction, some believer that is a candidate for a deeper experience. We never know who the cases are. It is frequently the very persons we least expect, but the Spirit knows, and I am to recognize Him as working on the people. This very recognition of His presence will inspire us with energy and definiteness.

Did you ever see a blind person in a room with nobody there and he felt himself alone? Did you ever notice the countenance of such a one when he supposed himself alone, and then recognized your presence? The very recogni-

tion of another presence transfigured his features. I knew an old blind lady, who, when sitting alone, wore a very sad expression, but at the sound of your footstep, or a spoken word, the change in her expression was marvelous. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm. To forget the presence of God, to regard Him as at a distance, is to detach ourselves from the source of power, and our souls droop. But the moment we intelligently and clearly apprehend, *God is here*, the Spirit, the Comforter is in this place, He is ready and willing to work through me to the pulling down of strongholds, what a difference it will make in our words, prayers and songs.

There will be a freedom, an unction, a gladness, which nothing else can inspire. "Lo, I am with you always." I do not care how poor or infirm or weak you are, the moment your soul clearly apprehends the eternal verity of that fact, "I am with you always," there will be kept open in your soul the secret spring of a power that is above all eloquence, for it makes eloquence; magnetism, for it creates magnetism; the power which alone is sufficient for gospel purposes.

These are some of the items which have come to me in connection with this subject. It is passing wonderful what utterly frail and weak

things God can use for His glory, especially when we work, not for our emolument or fame, but for the glory of the name of Jesus, perfectly willing to be loved and prized by God alone. When the Lord has been pleased to use us in any work, the best thing we can do is to give the work up to God the moment we are done with it and drop back into our native littleness and nothingness, and rest in God.

CHAPTER VII.

LIQUID AND SOLID FOOD.

IN THE fifth chapter of Hebrews we have a significant hint as to what constitutes spiritual perfection; it is the difference between feeding on liquid and solid food, or the difference between chewing and sucking. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat." The term "strong meat" could more emphatically be rendered solid food. "For every one that useth milk—that is, liquid food—is inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe"; that is, has not yet cut his teeth. "But strong meat—solid food—belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by the habit of perfection, have their senses—spiritual faculties—exercised to discern both good and evil." Heb. 5:12-14.

Instead of interpreting this Scripture so as to make Christian babyhood extend for twenty
(30)

years, until we reach our full human stature, and thereby locating Christian perfection a long time after regeneration, the real pivot of the teaching is the difference between teeth and no teeth, and drinking and chewing food. A babe who has not cut its teeth, is not perfect as a member of the *genus homo*, because he has not all the physical organs belonging to his species until he has teeth. The expression in the fourteenth verse about being of full age, in the original signifies perfection and has no reference to maturity or old age at all, but simply to the perfection or entirety of creaturehood, having all the parts and organs belonging to a complete creature, which a babe with no teeth does not have. So instead of the old legal analogy of putting complete salvation off into old age, it ought to come, according to the strict meaning of this Scripture, never later after the new birth than a set of teeth comes after the first birth. It is not perfection of time, but perfection of nature, that is taught in this passage. The difference between feeding on liquid and solid food is very pertinent, and can be recognized among professed Christians in many ways.

Solid and liquid truth. The perfect believer feeds on solid truth. That is, the whole truth as revealed in the Bible, the truth unmixed with fables or rationalistic perversions, or Sweden-

borgian dreams or ecclesiastical traditions, and not diluted with human creeds. He can chew the whole wheat and eschew the chaff. The baby Christian, on the other hand, must have the truth diluted before he can swallow it, it must come to him in his particular church bottle, labelled with his particular church authorities, boiled up according to his particular catechism, and in various ways mixed and diluted with some form or ceremony or mixture of uninspired thought to render it palatable to him.

The complete Christian is governed by solid principle and not liquid policy. It is humiliating to see how many baby Christians—even gray-headed babes, are governed by soft, flexible policy instead of a perfect unmixed principle. Touch any question of revealed truth or any application of truth to morals and reforms, such as prohibition, the Sabbath, tobacco, the use of money, the spread of holiness, and notice the lack of spinal column, of manly, outspoken truth. When we see the toning down of God's saving truth of professed scholars and theological teachers, the cringing before wealth and office, the cowardice and time-serving attitude toward all questions of divine moment, the adoption of human standards and human policies, the drifting with majorities, the accepting

of soft sentimentalism in doctrine and discipline, we get an evidence that multitudes of professed Christians have never cut their teeth, and have not enough bone in their moral mechanism to masticate the hard food which makes Christian heroes. We see the difference between solid and liquid feeding in the matter of tithing and the use of money. The full Christian makes the giving of money and the using of his worldly goods for the glory of God, just as much a part of his life as prayer or faith. He never waits for anniversary sermons or begging appeals, or oyster suppers or a Chicago fire, to draw out of him a pittance for the Lord; but having fed on the solid truth that "he is not his own," that "God loveth a cheerful giver," that he is to "lay up treasure in heaven," it becomes a part of his very Christian being to give according to his ability, for the spread of salvation. The liquid food Christian gives but scantily, without settled convictions or hearty joyousness in the act, and even then it is by spurts and spasms, when he is made to weep under some heartrending appeal, or when it is coaxed out of him by some teasing petitioner or by some church frolic or festival. When all the so-called money-giving of the church is sifted out before the judgment seat, how little of it will be seen to have sprung from a pure, generous, joyous

giving of the heart. Another difference of the solid and liquid feeding is found in the matter of comfort and consolation in seasons of sorrow and trial. The solid food Christian in hours of great distress and sorrow, will go to the pure Word and closet himself with God, and by praying in the Spirit and reposing on the great and precious promises and a steady looking to Jesus, will gather such comfort, such quietness of mind, such internal girdings of the heart, as the unrenewed mind has no conception of. The liquid food Christian will drop into murmurings and complainings, run to human or earthly springs for a draught of comfort, and failing to find it, will be tempted of Satan to apply to the quagmire of dreams or spiritual mediums or some other wretched device as a substitute for that pure crystal stream which flows alone from God and the Lamb.

CHAPTER VIII.

HINDRANCES TO FAITH.

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"
Matt. 14:31.

THE pivot word in this question is "wherefore." Doubt should have a sufficient reason for it. Neither Peter nor any other has been able to find a satisfactory answer to this all-piercing "wherefore" of Jesus. The implication is, God could allow us to doubt if we had sufficient reason for it. The unbelief of the human heart startled and amazed Jesus at every turn. It was like the air on the frozen polar sea, that pierced His sensitive nature on every side. God made man to believe, organized his whole being on that line, launched him out in such a sea of relationships with nature and the supernatural, with his fellows, with the past and future, that he could not exist, could never plant nor reap, never give nor receive testimony, in fact, never do anything of import, except by the exercise of a measure of faith. Doubt is no part of our original constitution, and can

never be explained, except on the basis of a terrible calamity in our moral nature. God has never deceived human beings, never played fast and loose with the hopes and fears of His creatures. The greatest reason for Peter's doubt was the remaining carnality in his soul, which prompted an uneasy fear in such a sudden emergency of danger. But while carnality is the root of unbelief, there are some other considerations which will enable us to explain it.

I. One hindrance to faith is that of *looking at our surroundings*, and not to the fixed promises of Jesus. In the incident of the text we have an example of the power of our surroundings *versus* the power of the promise of God. There were two things upon which Peter might fix his attention; one was the word "come," uttered by the Saviour, the other was the waves of water. Peter was not destitute of faith, for he asked the Lord to bid him walk on the sea. He felt an inward inclination to go out to Christ on the water, but wanted the authority of the Master's word like a plank under his feet to authorize him in doing so; and that sublime inward prompting which was evidently of God, never broke down until his eyes were diverted to take in the danger of the waves. Here we have the conflict in every life, that between the prompting of the inward Spirit to trust God

without reserve, and that of the senses which survey the instability of outward things. It is a battle between the invisible truth and the visible shadow, the stability of the rock and the motion of the sea. The appearance of the waves and the significance of the word "come," were to human reason directly the opposite of each other. Through all ages, the waves had never failed to drown, and on the other hand, God's word had never deceived any one; so here were two invariable things that met as opposites; the only question was, which of these invariables was the stronger; which law should have the precedence, that of gravity or that of the word of God? The word "come," from the lips of Jesus, had more authority than all the rolling seas, for it was the power of His simple word that set every sea in motion. The water had the *appearance* of power, but in the word of Jesus was the *real* power. Most of our life is illustrated by this incident. We live on a rolling sea, we are repeatedly shut up to the alternative of trusting either the appearance of things or the invisible truth of God. If we listen to the blowing of the wind, it will shut out the omnipotent voice of Jesus. If we look at the white-capped waves of circumstance, we shall not see the outstretched hand of Jesus. Each of us must come for himself to a fixed, irreversible decision, as to which

is reality, the wave or the word, and fasten ourselves to unchangeable truth.

II. Another hindrance to faith is that of *receiving honor of men*. Jesus asks us, "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" It is not seeking honor of men, but receiving it; that is, opening our heart to the cordial reception of human praise, or flattery, or fame, that utterly contravenes the repose of the soul in God. Receiving honor from men is a great virtue in the eyes of the world, but this is an instance in which things highly esteemed among men are an abomination to the Lord. It may not be seen by all at the first glance, how receiving worldly honor can prevent true faith in God, but a little reflection will show us that receiving worldly honor is an insidious, subtle and malignant form of idolatry. It has in it the element of man-fearing as well as man-worship. It is a subtle way of putting self in the place of God. It implies that our chief happiness comes from man, which is an ignoring of the true fountain of joy, and the hewing out of broken cisterns. This deference to the creature, this fearing or cringing to man, this love of place and distinction for self, severs the soul from Christ, diverts its trust to some other object and destroys true faith.

III. Another hindrance to faith is the *low state of faith in those around us*, and especially the unbelief of those occupying high places in the visible Church. In the days of Jesus it was asked, "Have any of the rulers believed on Him?" The great mass of nominal Christians are in such an infantile state of grace, as to lack the independence to launch out boldly and alone, and trust God radically and bravely, in spite of the coldness and half-heartedness of those in religious authority over them. How often it occurs in every age, that those who are set to guide the affairs of the Church, and its education and economy, have no warm, living faith in God, beyond a gross rationalistic faith in their ecclesiastical system, who, like Bonaparte, put their faith on the side of the heaviest battalions. It is a historical fact that faith kindles faith, fervent holiness inspires others to pursue it. Saints multiply in great revivals of religion. In the world of letters, great authors rise in clusters, the same thing is true of inventors, and there have been epochs in Church history where saints rose in constellations. We need to be incited by those of faith, but let us beware of toning down our trust to the level of the half believers and doubters that swarm around us.

IV. Perhaps the greatest hindrance to faith is *a lack of personal consecration to God*. We

are taught this in the twelfth of Hebrews, where in order to look to Jesus as the "beginner and perfecter of our faith," we are to lay aside every weight and the easily besetting sin. Just as long as there is defect in our consecration, there will be corresponding defects in our faith. We can trust God only to the extent that we are given up to Him. Your risk in a bank is up to the limit of your deposit. Consecration puts us right on believing ground. Consecration is cutting the shore lines, and faith is launching out into the deep. So the real question is, not why should I trust all to God, but why should I doubt anything of Him? Have His promises ever broken down? has He ever disappointed or deceived us? True, He often tests our faith, but at the last moment, in the worst extremity, His train of infinite mercy and provision has arrived on schedule time, and the finale in many a psalm of life has been, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

CHAPTER IX.

"FAINT NOT"

THERE is an experience of soul exactly like the fainting of the body. When a person faints there is an utter loss of strength accompanied with a real sickish feeling, paleness and a clammy sweat, causing the body to get limp, beyond the control of the will, and fall away in an unconscious swoon. There is a real fainting of the soul which we are admonished against in the Word, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, for which cause we faint not." "Faint, yet perishing."

Some of the feelings which may lead the Christian heart to faint are the following:

A feeling of loneliness of soul, as if we were isolated from all other spirits, and especially shut off from the souls that are around us. We seem to be a castaway on some ethereal and desert island, with all intelligible communication with other souls cut off. We sometimes think

we would like to open all our inner feelings to a fellow-spirit, but if the opportunity occurs to do so, an invisible yet powerful check is laid upon us. We seem to be more in fellowship with the souls of far-distant ages than with those near by. We seem to pace the boundless shore of our solitary island, waiting for any sort of a change to break upon our experience, until we feel like sinking down under sheer sameness and monotone of soul.

Another feeling is that of being caged in, hampered and tied in an inextricable manner. Providence seems to go off and leave us to the heartlessness of a thousand petty demons who pervade every little circumstance; who seem, like the fabled Liliputians, to tie our hands and feet while we sleep; who snap all the threads in our financial looms; who upset our ordinary plans; who turn anticipated joys into ashes; who bother us with a host of mental perplexities too subtle to define and too numerous to count. There are times when a current of such things seems to set in; times when everything seems to weave itself into a network of crippling environment, and any effort to extricate ourselves only bruises us. At such times the question is shot into the mind, "What's the use?"

Another feeling is that of a strange pressure

and a heavy bearing down in the soul, it seems we cannot get low enough to slip out from under the weight; the floor or ground is entirely too high for us.

Another feeling is that of paralysis. The faculties seem benumbed and unable to exert themselves. Prayer is not versatile and fluent, but is reduced to a heart groan or the simple cry of the woman in the gospel, "Lord, help me." This inertia of the faculties is accompanied with a sense of weariness in the soul; the Holy Spirit recognizes this state of experience and distinctly mentions this heart tiredness, "Lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." The Spirit has given us three remedies to prevent soul-fainting:

One remedy is, "Consider Him who endured . . . lest ye be weary and faint." When prayer is inert, when every pinion of heart and mind is bound we are to quietly fix our consideration on Him who endured; spread out before the mind how He was cramped, limited, contradicted; His inner feelings fettered and smitten in a thousand inconceivable ways; how the normal yearnings of His heart were denied and snubbed; how the whole of His outward environment was at such horrible disagreement with the fitness of things in His soul; to consider all this, and much more which will occur to a

meditative soul, will bring a sense of fellowship with Him which is excellent medicine for faintness of spirit.

Another remedy is, "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." God arranges, or permits, for our chastening to come to us in such strange and unlooked-for ways, in such mortifying and disagreeable circumstances, by such undignified and outlandish agencies that we are apt to "despise the chastening."

We think we could take the scourging much better if it were applied with a more dignified and beautiful whip. Our chastisement often occurs by things in which we see no semblance of divinity. The trials, the besetments, the persons, the events, the gnarled and knotty annoyances, which God employs to correct or rebuke us, seem often so low and mean and out of harmony with the fitness of things that we are liable to despise the correction. Now, if we can discover the hand of God in all these ugly things, if we can see the divine presence under all this network of unpleasantness, it will at once throw a new light on them, and the recognition of His presence will keep us from fainting. "Despise not the chastening of the Lord nor faint when thou art rebuked by Him."

Another remedy for soul-fainting is the manifestation of Jesus to the inner spirit. Paul tells

us in second Corinthians, fourth chapter, that God hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and says this manifestation is a treasure which we have in earthen vessels, then, after alluding to our peculiar sufferings, concludes by saying, "For which cause we faint not." So the best cure for heart-fainting is the blessedness of Jesus revealed in us by the Holy Ghost. The clear, deep apprehension of Jesus as a personal, sympathizing, indwelling Saviour is a soul tonic, an invigorating balm to the spirit which nothing else can be.

CHAPTER X.

AFFLICTION AND GLORY.

“**F**OR our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18.

The two pivot words in this Scripture are working and looking. The affliction worketh glory, while the believer looketh at the unseen.

The term “worketh” covers the domain of the Holy Spirit’s office, and the term “looketh” covers the domain of the believer’s activity. The truth taught in the verses is that of a marvelous transmutation of pain into pleasure, of hardship into happiness, of tribulation into transport. It is an inconceivable wonder of divine chemistry in which affliction, time, the believing soul and the Holy Spirit are factors. Elsewhere Paul tells us that he “reckoned the

sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be in us." It were as if by the light of eternity he had weighed and measured the elements of suffering and glory and reached a mathematical conclusion. But this could only be by taking into his comprehensive grasp the entire destiny of the Christian. Had he confined his calculations to a small section of human existence, the result would have been far different. God sees all things, even the smallest, in the light of their true and eternal relations, and it was in that light that Paul surveyed the interests of mankind and especially those of the Christian; not with reference to a brief period in their existence, but swept with eagle eye the entire annals of their destiny. This is the only light in which we can perceive the equality and justice of God's ways, or by which we can interpret the dark and contradictory problems of life.

We can never see the full harmony and proportion of parts in any subject of observation without taking in the whole, and studying the relation of each part to the whole. When this life is cut off from the future, everything in it is utterly unexplainable. You may select a few of the finest notes in some majestic anthem, and if they are sounded alone and apart from the

whole, they would lose all their melody and charm. Each note alone as a monotone is unmusical, but when they all glide together in round billows of music they roll and break with strange rapture upon our ears. The inequalities of the earth's surface, the elevations and depressions, if viewed only with reference to small sections, seem out of all proportion, but could we station ourselves at a sufficient distance from the earth and see its whole circumference pass in review before us, then every local inequality would be so related to the whole as to render them constituents of harmony and perfection. In like manner, we do not live long enough to catch the full anthem of God's administration. His providence strikes a few notes in our ears during our short lives, but from these we cannot gather "the full diapason thunder roll," the completion of which fills the flight of ages. And the inequalities of human fortune "the good man's tears, the pangs of despised love, the law's delays, the insolence of office, the scorn which patient merit bears," compose a moral landscape in life like Alps and deserts out of all proportion, until human destiny is surveyed in its entire orbit with its far-reaching circumference of immortality.

The spiritual chemistry suggested in the text

is well worth analysis. It would seem that everything depends on the moral quality of the soul and its attitude toward the unseen. If the believer is holy, if his nature is in harmony with the Holy Spirit, if he habitually looks to the things of eternity, then whatever of suffering enters into his life is transmuted by the moral quality of his heart into the gold of glory. Just as the oak converts all chemistry into oak by the peculiar quality of its oak life, so the pure in heart, he that lives the Christ life, will from the dark chemistry of this world — its disappointments and suffering — turn all things into glory and praise.

There are three contrasts in the text, that between affliction and glory, that between the terms light and weight, and that between momentary and eternal; and between these opposites is the soul of the believer. The first opposites are affliction and glory. This refers to that particular kind of glory which belongs to each individual Christian which St. Paul elsewhere calls the "glory to be revealed in us," and which is not transferable to anyone else. Though there is such a contrast between affliction and glory, yet when you place a trusting, obedient Christian soul between them, such a soul becomes a divine laboratory through which the working process goes on, and under the

touch of the Almighty Spirit of God, coöperating with man's obedience and love, the sourest acid of affliction is transmuted into the sweetest fruit of glory. There seems no intimate relation between prussic acid and a ripe peach, but if you interpose the roots and trunk of a vital healthy peach tree between them, that deadliest of poisons in passing through the arteries and life of the tree is transformed into one of the most luscious of fruits. So that it is not the affliction in itself that constitutes the glory, but it is the affliction working itself through a regenerated and purified soul, otherwise it would remain a deadly poison, "for the sorrow of the world worketh death." Affliction can work out glory in the soul by bringing it into most thorough acquiescence to the divine will and purpose. While it cannot purify the soul it can bring the soul into such submission to the divine will, that the whole purpose of God's saving remedy can pass unobstructed through the heart.

We go through tribulation, but moral whiteness is by the blood of the Lamb. We are, and through eternity must remain, under the sovereign will and wisdom of God, but that authority over us will be a source of boundless fear and pain unless we are in agreement with it. This alone will fit us as subjects for such a

kingdom, for the issues and employments of immortality. This great lesson cannot be learned amid an unbroken flow of mild indulgence. If divine providence should never cross the path of our earthly happiness, our faith and loyalty would have no test, we would not come in direct contact with divine authority. It is affliction that makes the hand of God, as it were, tangible to the soul, it is then that we touch the sceptre of the Almighty.

Again, affliction may work glory in the soul by enlarging its capacities. The capacity of suffering and enjoyment must be equal and that species of joy which comes out of suffering is in the nature of things doubled. The glory of any being is in proportion to the greatness of its capabilities to the volume and variety of experiences which it can contain. Therefore, whatever enlarges our conformity to the cross of Christ, to His diversified self-abnegation, to His patient suffering, must increase possibilities of enjoyment with Him. In the afflictions incident to a true Christian arising from such multiplied and sometimes opposite sources, there is a strain upon the mind, a stress of longing, a hot tension of feeling, a surging of sensibility, an upheaving of the under-ocean of the soul which causes the waters of life to swell beyond their former shores, and imparts to it

such keenness of taste, such relish for the highest and best, as qualifies it to more fully appreciate the joys that are divine.

Again, affliction works glory by widening the circle of knowledge and fellowship with the moral universe, by giving us a similarity and acquaintance with the great and good of all ages. If our religious life should be an uninterrupted season of summer days, it would debar us from knowing a large portion of the moral experiences of the world; it would exclude us from the inner and sublime fellowship of the martyrs and the white-robed company who have gone up through great tribulation. Affliction is the alphabet through which we read large portions of revelation; it is the clew by which we interpret the shaded lore of the oppressed, the persecuted and heroic of all time; the sheepskin brigade of whom the world was not worthy; it furnishes a passport to the internal solitudes of the man of sorrows, and unveils the mysterious anguish of the man of Uz. Thus, by extending the circle of fellowship with the great and good, by sinking us into deeper union with the divine will, by testing the principles of love and obedience, by curbing our impetuosity, by chastening our judgment, by melting to a warmer temperature the feelings of the heart, by enlarging the

sweep of our sympathies, affliction can be made to throw over our whole character a softer and brighter luster than it were possible otherwise to obtain. These are a few instances by which affliction may work out in a Christian an imperishable glory, a glory which is rooted and grounded in the character, a glory which sprouts, blooms and fruits from the torn and ploughed soil of the soul, a glory which being planted in your own nature, warmed by your own prayers, and watered with your own tears, can never be taken from you, but an inherent internal product of glory, beauty and honor, beaming with perennial loveliness upon your own character and fitted to adorn the paradise of God.

CHAPTER XI.

AFFLICTION AND GLORY.

THE next contrast is between the words "light" and "weight." When the apostle characterized the afflictions of the Christian as light, it was not because He looked upon them with a stoical spirit, or failed to measure either their intensity or dimension, for, like his Master, in his life he had accented nearly every syllable in the volume of affliction. But he pronounced them light, because from the standpoint of inspired reason and as related to immortality, they are light. They are light because they spring from the lower and earthly side of our existence. The afflictions of a true Christian cannot spring from the wrath of God, nor the dreadful forebodings of judgment.

The nature of these afflictions is referred to in the words "perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not destroyed, cast down but not forsaken," they are located outside of the spiritual life; they may arise from the mind or the body, from some thorn in the flesh, from

our social environments, or from the state of our earthly fortunes. If we take the catalogue of all possible affliction, the loss of health, the pinch of poverty, the tongue of slander, the desolation of bereavement, the eclipse of reason, the dungeon of imprisonment, the red torch of persecution and death itself, they are all on the outer, earthly side of the soul. They cannot penetrate the inner citadel of the spirit, nor break the union of a perfectly loyal heart with its God. But the glory on the other hand fills the upper and moral nature, and in heaven will fill the whole outward life as well. So that while earthly affliction can invade only a portion of our life and being, the glory that is to be wrought out in us will envelope the whole being and leave no space for pain or want. Furthermore, the afflictions of the Christian are light because they are always blended with so many opposite and alleviating elements.

The particles of anguish do not come so close together as to form a solid, but are mixed and diluted with much that soothes and medicates. So much of art is exerted to alleviate our ills, so many streams of sympathy are poured into even the darkest waters of life, and the principle of hope will ever light its lamp in the darkest passages, that whatever combination of ills we suffer, they are not absolutely unmixed.

Now, in contrast with these afflictions which are neutralized, the glory will be unmixed and undiluted with any opposite. We say of a sponge that it is light because its particles are so widely separated as to admit of much air and water. In contrast with the sponge, a block of pure gold of the same size would be very weighty. The afflictions of the Christian are like the nature of the sponge, which will admit opposite elements, while the glory will be like the nature of solid gold, the particles of unmixed bliss, the atoms of light and love, will be so compressed into every part of our being and every moment of our duration as to form the nature of a solid. It will be a glory of such magnitude and splendor that our present senses and faculties could not endure, a weight of glory like that of the orchard bending under its load of ripened fruit.

The third contrast is between "momentary" and "eternal," the affliction is momentary, the glory is eternal. Life itself is only a moment to eternity; yet it is only a small portion of the average Christian life that is subjected to affliction. If our life extended to antediluvian longevity, and the whole of it was a scene of affliction, still it would dwindle to a twinkling moment in the mighty roll of innumerable ages. And when we turn our contemplation

from the brevity of affliction to the unending nature of the glory, we find our faculties overwhelmed by the majesty of eternity. Here the feeblest and most towering imaginations are on a level, for they both equally fail to comprehend it. We cannot even approximate it for when we have, in fancy, borne ourselves forward on the stream of ages through millions of years, it still stretches away as vast as ever, the one solitary, shoreless, fathomless eternity. It is this infinite disparity between the duration of present affliction and future glory which makes it so marvelous to us. Is it not a stroke of infinite wisdom to so adjust the moral forces in a Christian soul as to cause such endless results to flow from such a momentary season of suffering? Every reflective mind must be startled at the disproportion which there is between the brief season of probation and the everlasting results of it. We wonder that such a short space of toil can be followed by such a length of repose, that the littleness of the field can yield such an extended harvest, and that a few moments of affliction can work out such everlasting glory.

If the glory spoken of in the text was acquired as wages for work done, there would have to be some due proportion of time between the work and the wages, and it often happens

in this world that the period of labor is more extended than the period of reward, for thousands of men will struggle for half a century for the brief reward of five or ten years in some splendid office. The economy of infinite mercy is just the opposite. Our afflictions, then, do not partake of the nature of toil, with glory for its wages, but they are, under the operation of the Holy Ghost, in the nature of a cause working within us the lasting effect of glory. While there is no proportion between a moment's work and an eternity of wages, there is some proportion between a momentary cause and an everlasting effect. Should God create a single mountain and attach it to the surface of our globe, it would be a very light and trivial burden for the world to carry, like the addition of a tiny feather to a soaring eagle, which it could not perceive. And yet the addition of that mountain would most certainly increase the bulk and gravity of our planet, it would likely cause it to verge nearer the sun, it would affect the speed of its revolution, it would gradually change the motions of our solar system, and in the long lapse of years it would send a gradual change of motion through the innumerable orbs of creation. In like manner, an affliction which is light in its nature and momentary in its duration, resting on an obedient, trusting soul,

under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, will lend a gravity to the moral character, cause it to approach nearer to Christ, and set in revolution a new order of thoughts and feelings, which will dilate and stretch through the endless cycles of immortality. But let us remember that affliction can work out these glorious results, only while, in the attitude of perfect heart loyalty to Jesus, we habitually look at the things which are not seen. When we weep, it is by looking through our tears to that hand which will wipe all tears from our eyes that they will be turned into pearls of joy.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ZONE OF ENTIRE CONSECRATION.

ENTIRE consecration is misunderstood by many who place it at one of two extremes. Some put it down with repentance and make it an element in repentance, or taking place at the same time. Others place it up with sanctification and identify it with the work of cleansing. The true zone of entire consecration lies between these two extremes. Entire consecration viewed Scripturally and experimentally comes after repentance and can be performed only by a living subject of grace, and on the other hand it precedes the work of purification, and prepares the way for that experience. Let us notice wherein consecration differs from repentance. Repentance has reference to our relation to sin and punishment; entire consecration has reference to our relation to the will and service of God. Repentance is the renunciation of all our sins, evil associations, ungodly alliances, unholy pursuits and business.

Entire consecration is just the opposite of

this, it is the cordial yielding up of all our good things, our affections, our loved ones, our possessions, our reputation, our legitimate plans, purposes and prospects, our free will, our very life and destiny to the perfect will of God, subject to His disposal at all times. The first is giving up the bad things, the second is giving up the good things. If I may so speak, in repentance we let Satan take what belongs to him, and in consecration we let God take what belongs to Him. Again, the motive to repentance is to escape punishment, to flee from the wrath to come; the motive that prompts entire consecration is a longing for a better experience, a desire to be like Jesus. Consecration is of the nature of making a will, of giving ourselves up a free-will offering to God, of making a quitclaim deed of ourselves and all our effects. But in order to execute such a will or deed, we must be citizens of the heavenly kingdom. Under our civil laws, a man who is under sentence of death, be he ever so rich, cannot make a will, or deed away a piece of property, for in the eye of the law he is dead. In like manner all impenitent sinners are condemned already, they are under the death sentence, and only awaiting the execution. Hence, they cannot make a free-will offering of themselves to God, or deed themselves away to Christ in the true

sense of Scriptural consecration, until they are pardoned and restored to heavenly citizenship. So the Scriptures speak of offering ourselves "a living sacrifice," and of "yielding ourselves unto God as those which are alive from the dead." The same thought is illustrated by joining the army. A soldier in joining the army virtually offers himself up to die, he is a living sacrifice on the altar of his country, but it is only an uncondemned citizen who can thus offer himself.

No foreigner or unnaturalized person can join the army. Citizenship must precede soldiership. Such is true in grace, we must first be adopted and become citizens in the kingdom of grace before we can enter the true soldier covenant, and offer ourselves up to die for the King. It takes a good deal of grace in the heart to carry us through the act of entire abandonment to God. Entire consecration involves such a dying out of self, such a detailed yielding to the Lord, that no cold, formal Christian, no backslider in heart can do it. Only the subject of true saving grace can go through with it. So we see entire consecration is beyond repentance, and, in many things, quite different from it.

Now, let us notice the difference between consecration and purification. Consecration is

our work, purification is the Lord's work. When we want our watches cleaned and oiled, we take them to a jeweler, and leave them with him, he cleanses them and rectifies their machinery. Our hearts are our watches, we commit them unlimitedly to Jesus; He, by His Spirit, cleanses them and rectifies their movements. Many persons are prejudiced against the word sanctification, and habitually use the word consecration as a synonym of sanctification. This is putting the word too high. There is a subtle reason for this, the unsanctified mind instinctively magnifies the human side.

You will notice that all persons who are not deeply spiritual will, without knowing it, ignore or minimize the supernatural in religion; their eye is not on God half as much as it is on self, consequently they dwell almost exclusively on the human side of religion, upon the struggles, the trying, the doing of the creature. And because consecration is the act of the creature, it is magnified as the climax of religion; whereas, in reality, it is but "making straight paths for our feet," leveling the mountains, "gathering out the stones," "preparing the way of the Lord," opening up the avenue for the sanctifying Spirit to enter in. In saying that entire consecration is the act of the creature, it is understood that we can only do it through

the help of the Holy Ghost, for every step in grace from repentance onward, is taken through the assistance of the Spirit of God. Consecration begins in the spirit of adoption, and it is completed just before the divine act of purification.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ENTIRETY IN CONSECRATION.

ALL believers are, in a measure, consecrated to God, just as all believers are, in a measure, sanctified. The spirit of consecration is a part of the new life imparted to the soul in regeneration; but in order to receive the full baptism of the Spirit, the principle of consecration must be carried to completeness. Just as long as consecration is defective on any point, or in any degree, the experience of complete cleansing and filling cannot be received. The fullness of salvation is conditioned on perfect trust in Jesus as a present Saviour, and on the other hand this perfect truth is conditioned on the perfect yielding of self up to God. Hence, if there is any defect or shortage in consecration, it most surely blocks the way to the entrance into full salvation. Every believer is consecrated, but not all in equal degrees. Some converted people, who are not fully sanctified, are much more yielding to God than others are, and have only a few more steps

to take in order to reach the state of entire abandonment, whereas others are so slightly yielded, as to be a long way from it. Again, all believers are not equally yielded on the same points. Some will more readily yield on certain points than others. There are always one or two points which are the last to be yielded, and upon which the self life has a death struggle; but these points of death struggle are very different with different souls.

The three great lines of consecration are, to be anything the Lord wants us to *be*; to do anything the Lord wants us to *do*; to suffer anything the Lord wants us to *suffer*. These embrace the subjective, the active and the passive forms of our existence, and to consent to all these three things, willingly, without a reservation, is the perfection of consecration. As each soul passes through these three things, there will come up a panorama of possibilities and contingencies according to each one's condition, nature, or environment, upon which the principle of loyalty will be tested. Some will find their complete yielding the hardest on the willing to *be*, others, on the willing to *do*, and others, on the willing to *suffer*. Unless consecration reaches the point of entirety, the soul will slip back and be consecrating itself over and over again a thousand times, without

gaining a distinct step of victory, or making any positive progress. We hear a great deal about reconsecrating ourselves, and making a fresh consecration, which is mere delusive talk, and does not get the soul where positive results are brought to pass. When the soul is perfectly yielded to God on every point, and for all time and eternity as well, it can drive a stake down, and hold its position. It has then got to the end of making good resolutions, it is then done with going over the same ground of giving up, it has reached the place of anchorage, it can then truly say,

“‘Tis done, the great transaction’s done,
I am my Lord’s, and He is mine.”

A good illustration of entire consecration is that of tapping the car wheels. Many a time as I have been traveling on a sleeping car, I have been awakened in the night by the hammer of the wheel tester. At some principal station, where the engines are exchanged a man will pass along the train with a flaming torch in one hand, and a hammer in the other; with the light he first examines the wheels and axles under the cars, then with the hammer gives a sharp rap on the wheels. If there is a single crack, ever so small in a wheel, it will be indicated by the defective ring. That crack in a single wheel will stop the progress of that

coach, it must be sent to the shop for repairs ; and when every wheel gives a clear ring it can be sent on its journey at express speed. So in seasons of revival, at camp meetings or conventions, or with many a soul in retired life, God comes to examine the inner wheels of our mortal being. With the torch of His Spirit He searches underneath, and the recesses of our hearts, the axle tree of our will, the wheels of our motives and propensities, and with the hammer of His Word He taps on every wheel. If there be a defect in our consecration, it will be indicated by a crack in some wheel which will fail to ring out clearly "Thy will be done." This will stop the progress of the soul, the great master mechanic will order us into the repair shop of grace, and when every wheel in us responds affirmatively to the stroke of His Word we are then sent on our journey to the celestial city on schedule time.

Some may ask "How can I know when my consecration is entire?" The best answer is, "You will know it." There is a tremendous inner sense of giving up, of letting go, of getting through with your trying, of cutting the last shore line.

There is an inward feeling that you have rolled yourself over on the Lord, and instead of trying to give up, you find yourself looking

for something more to yield, and wondering at the littleness of what you have given. At the point where consecration is entire, perfect trust is spontaneous, easy and natural.

CHAPTER XIV.

EXCAVATION BEFORE EDIFICATION.

THE great prerequisite of perfect love is the thorough emptying of the heart of every principle and disposition contrary to love. No one can love God with all the heart, while original sin remains, for the carnal mind resides in the heart, and it is evident that if a part of the heart or moral nature is taken up with evil, the entire heart cannot, at the same time, be in conformity to God's will.

This seems a very simple and self-evident proposition, yet it is so difficult to convince the most of professing Christians of this truth when it comes to actual experience. I have observed the following things to be true:

1. That a great many will agree to the doctrine of loving God with all the heart, and many profess to be doing it who are utterly averse to the doctrine of heart purity, and repudiate the idea of being sanctified. If such persons understood the true Scriptural meaning of loving God with all the heart they would

know that such language implied the thorough purification of the heart from the carnal mind. There is so much loose and disjointed religious thinking abroad in the church, that hardly one in a hundred seems to have any definite Scriptural view of actual and original sin, of regeneration, or heart purity, and kindred subjects. The whole of Bible doctrines seems thrown together in a sort of a theological hash, and it is common to hear people announcing and denying the same truth in the same breath, affirming that they want to be whole-hearted Christians (which really means holiness-hearted) and in the next breath denying the very condition of purification by which whole-heartedness is reached. If a glass of water contains one grain of sand, it cannot be filled with water, for to be filled with water it must contain no other substance.

2. I have observed that some teach the receiving of the full baptism of the Spirit, while at the same time, strongly denying the destruction of inward sin. But, according to the Word of God, the two things are utterly contrary to each other, and I have never in all my travels found or heard of a person actually receiving the baptism of the Spirit under such teaching.

3. That the depth and perpetuity of religious experience is in proportion to the depth of heart

excavation. The higher the edifice, the deeper and broader must the foundation be. This principle is true everywhere in nature, mind and morals. If the great work of heart sanctification were a mere blessing, which so many think it to be, it would not require such a deep foundation. Many think the work of holiness, like a traveler's tent, which can be readily pitched without a foundation, whereas it is a great palace of inward life built to last through the ages, and must needs have a foundation broad and deep in the very bed-rock of our nature. I have heard that when the great Corn Exchange of New York was built, the expenditure upon the foundation was so immense that the contractor reckoned the building about half done when the basement story was finished. The greatest part of the work of full salvation is the digging away the hindrance to God's grace out of our being. It is very easy for grace to fill a clean vessel.

4. To be filled with the positive graces of the Spirit, is always a popular thought among religious people ; but to be crucified, emptied, cleansed in order to be so filled is exceedingly unpopular. If a reporter should go through the Christian churches reporting all the prayers offered, nearly all of them would be prayers to be filled and rarely would there be one offered

for complete cleansing from inward sin. Mr. Wesley found that the people readily accepted his preaching on being filled with faith, resignation, hope, love, gentleness, good works and such ; but when he expounded the necessity of being entirely cleansed from all sin in both root and branch, there was much outcry against his teaching. So it is now, and so it will ever be. Old Adam, the fallen nature, clings tenaciously for a little space in our being.

The story is told of an old Scotch lady, who thought that grieving over heart depravity was the highest possible state of grace, and is reported to have said, "If you take away my original sin, you take away all my religion." As odd and contradictory as this may seem, yet multitudes of professing Christians seem to view it in that light. When we read the lives of eminent saints whose graces and toils and triumphs made them the chandeliers in the visible church, who seemed more like celestial visitants than the plodding mortals of our world, we crave to be flooded with the warm fervor of their hearts, the bold heroism of their testimony, the fervency and faith of their prayers, and the lustre of their dying triumphs. But are we willing to pay the price they paid, to go through such crucifixions, to endure the self-denials, the heart emptyings, the fastings

and wrestlings in prayer, which laid the foundations of their loveliness and were the stepping-stones to their heavenly greatness?

If we want Pentecostal power we must pay Pentecostal prices. To be filled with converting grace we must pay the price of giving up all our actual sins. To be filled with pure love, we must pay the "upper room" price, of giving up our whole being, life and destiny to the will of God. The deeper we die the deeper we live. The lower we excavate the higher we build.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NATURE OF PERFECT LOVE.

THE misapprehension of the nature of perfect love is the basis of all the misunderstandings and false notions respecting it. There never has been a book written, or a sermon preached, against the experience of Christian perfection, that did not have for its starting point an erroneous and un-Scriptural view as to what it was. No one has yet been found to either antagonize or disbelieve the obtainability of perfect love, who had a correct view of it.

We have to say over again a thousand times, it is perfection of quality and not the perfection of quantity or ripeness. Concerning the nature of perfect love we may notice:

1. It is a perfection that applies to the heart, that is, to the moral, religious department of man's being. Man is a tripartite creature of body, soul and spirit. The body will never reach its perfection—that is, exemption from all deformity, disease, pain, death, until it is resurrected and glorified. The soul,

which is, properly speaking, the mind, embracing the sensibilities and intellectual faculties and appetencies, will never be perfect, that is, delivered from all disproportion of faculties, from all mistakes of judgment and defective apprehension, until it enters the celestial state of being. But the heart, which is the true spiritual part of man, is that zone of his being in which character resides. The heart embraces the conscience, the affections and the will. The conscience to feel right and wrong, the affections to hate or love the right or the wrong, and the will to choose the right or the wrong. All of these things enter into the composition of responsible moral character wherever it is found. All through the Word of God, the heart is the real man, it is called the "inner man," it is the spring out of which flow the "issues of life," it is the "tree" that bears the fruit of action, it is the center and citadel of character. It is in this region of man where the great work of salvation takes place, conviction, regeneration, sanctification and the manifestation of divine things. The heart uses the mind and the body as its instruments; hence God says, "Give Me thy heart," knowing that if He can get full possession there He can, through the moral nature, govern the whole man. How easy it is for all the powers of intel-

lect and body to move with the current of the affections and do their bidding. The Bible invariably locates the principle of sin in the heart, and not in the body or intellectual faculties; but, strange to say, I have never found a person or a book antagonizing Christian perfection, that did not locate the carnal mind either in the body or mental faculties. As the heart is the lodging place of original sin, so in Scripture the cleansing power of Jesus is always directed there. Hence we read, "Blessed are the pure in heart," "He that loveth pureness of heart," "Purifying their hearts by faith," "Purify your hearts ye double-minded," "Having our hearts sprinkled (that is, cleansed) from an evil conscience," "Love out of a pure heart," "Love with all thy heart," "Let your heart be perfect with the Lord," David said to Solomon, "Serve the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind," but he does not say perfect mind. Perfection is predicted of the heart, but willingness, teachableness is required of the mind.

2. The perfection of Christian love consists in its unmixedness or simplicity. A thing is said to be simple when it is not mixed with other substances, as water is simple or pure when unmixed with other liquids or earth. Thus, we speak of pure gold, pure honey, etc., when these things exist in a clarified state. So

when the love of God fills the purified heart, it is in a state of simplicity. There is humility without pride mixed with it; love toward God and man without any form of hatred; there is submission without any subtle rebellion; there is faith or trust without any scepticism or doubt; there is grace without the admixture of depravity. Some one may ask, does God put mixed grace into a human heart? No, never. But His grace, which is imparted in regeneration, is choked and impeded by our original depravity. So it is not divine grace that needs to be clarified but we ourselves, our hearts need to be entirely cleansed so that God's grace can exist in us in an unmingled clarified condition. I was once riding with a friend in a western city, on a bright September day. He wished me to explain the nature of perfect love. I said, "Do you see that sunshine? Is not this a perfect day? What hinders the sunshine from being perfect?" He said, "It would be perfect but for the smoke and dust from the city!" "Exactly," I said, "but there is no dust and smoke in the sun, but that arises from the city and they get mixed, but not amalgamated. The sunshine remains sunshine and the smoke remains smoke, but they exist in the same atmosphere. Now, if a heavy rain should cleanse the air from all impurity and then the bright

sun should shine out, you would have the sunshine filling the air without dust or smoke and that would be perfect sunshine. Now," I said, "When you were converted God put His love into your heart, but have you not had much dust and smoke in your experience?" "Oh, yes!" he said. "But where did the dust and smoke come from?" He answered, "Not from God, but from my own heart." "Now," I said, "if you should have a Pentecostal thunderstorm to wash the dust and smoke out of your nature, then the same love that you received in regeneration could exist in a simple and unmixed state within you." So that sanctification does not impart to us any new graces, but removes from us the antagonism to the graces, and, thus, all the graces imparted in regeneration can abide in a quiet, peaceful condition. God can make our hearts His quiet resting-place, when all the opposites to His will have been removed, just as Christian families can peacefully inhabit and cultivate the fertile plains of the West, when all the savages have been entirely removed to a distant part of the earth.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EFFECTS OF PERFECT LOVE.

PERHAPS the most effectual way of inducing Christians to seek perfect love, is to show the great benefits resulting from the experience. This is what Mr. Wesley termed preaching perfection by promise, which he regarded as the most successful way of teaching it. Some may ask, What is the difference between the effects of love previous to, and after, full sanctification? The effects are the same in kind, but different in degree. Previous to the full baptism of love, the Christian graces are checked more or less by remaining carnality. There is a conscious limitation, impediment, embarrassment, timidity, shrinking, sluggishness and other forms of hindrance, which prevent the full, free, outflowing effects which would naturally spring from unmixed love. Christian perfection does not purify the graces, but purifies the soul-soil in which the graces grow. It is not another kind of religion, but the same kind we had before, with the internal hindrances

removed, the same corn with the weeds extracted, the same fire with the smoke consumed; it is a converted life made easy. We can easily see the effects of perfect love if we apply it to Christian duties. The believer has no more duties resting on him after his full purification than before, but there is a marvelous difference in the promptness, ease, liberty and regularity with which the duties are performed. Justification binds on us the same law of life that sanctification does. We see this illustrated in Scripture. All the duties and laws given to the children of Israel were while they were in the wilderness, and yet over and over again, it is said, thus and thus "shall ye do when you come into the land of promise," showing us that it was entering the land of promise which was to render the keeping of those laws practicable and easy. The same truth is repeated in the New Testament. Jesus imposed on his disciples every precept and duty before their full salvation on the day of Pentecost, but taught them that in order to the sure performance to all His commands, they were to "wait until they were endued with power from on high."

The same truth is repeated in our experience. After we are converted, we feel upon our spirits the pressure of many calls and obligations. A new world and a new life is open before us, con-

victions of privilege and duty often come to us, and we feel the need of an inward liberty and unction, and a bold, prompt movement to their performance. This is what the full baptism of love supplies. It lubricates all our moral machinery, it oils the secret wheels of action, so that we speak, or pray, or write, or decide, or give, or forgive, with an alacrity, firmness and conscious joy we never did before.

Justification says, "Search the Scriptures," but perfect love says, "Thy Word is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." The first says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," the second says, "I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord." It often happens that the overflow of perfect love renders the ordinary duties of life a pure delight, as looking through the camera upon some ordinary scenery transforms it into a vista of beauty. We are not to hunt so much for new and extraordinary duties as we are for that pure fullness of love which adds a new zest to every old one.

Another emphatic result of perfect love is the wonderful deliverance it imparts from the fear of man. It puts us where we can love everybody, but cringe to nobody, fear nobody. We are not afraid of the criticisms, or threatenings, or the big majorities of our fellows.

What an infinite boon such an experience is in this time-serving, man-fearing world! How many Christians there are, who, for lack of perfect love, fail to speak out, or vote, or act, or take the stand which their silent convictions call them to. The Holy Spirit has well said that "the fear of man bringeth a snare." Several instances have occurred under my observation, where ministers were timid about preaching full salvation, for fear of offending prominent hearers; when those same prominent hearers were thirsting for heart purity, and welcomed a full gospel with delight.

The fullness of love will also remove our fear of God's providence. So many Christians are distressed for fear God's providence will fail them. One is always afraid he will go to the poorhouse. Another is afraid to give his tithes to God lest he should never get them back. Another is afraid of sudden death. Another is afraid of certain forms of disease. Another is afraid of some imaginary calamity to his family. Until trust in God is complete, some imaginary lion puts the heart into a flutter of dismay. Perfect love clarifies the vision to discern the completeness of God's special providence. It makes the form of the fourth moving amid the fiery ordeals of life a positive reality. It is not a spirit of rashness, but an

obedient doing of our best, and then resting all results on the bosom of God's care. It is not claiming that He will always do as we ask or plan, but it is a sweet repose in His wisdom and love that He will do *the best* for us. Perfect love destroys the fear of death. It enables the soul to see death in the true Scriptural light, and not only so, but to see through death in such a way that heaven is a reality. Love conquers all things, even death.

CHAPTER XVII.

SUPERFICIAL RELIGIOUS LIFE.

THERE is a wonderful propensity in fallen human nature to be superficial. This disposition is manifest in every form of life-work and character. It is stimulated in every branch of life by an inordinate desire for speedy results and external show, instead of abiding reality. Thoroughness is a fruit of industry, but sin has so paralyzed man's nature as to produce idleness and inertia. While this statement will apply to every branch of life and achievement, yet it is pre-eminently true in the matter of religion. The religion of the Bible deals with the deepest part of our nature, the conscience, the will and heart. It deals with realities of the unseen and eternal world, it involves the profoundest facts, truths and experiences in the universe. In the very nature of things it is the most real and enduring fact in the creation, compared to which all other interests in time are as morning mists. If mere surface work is destructive in other branches of life, then anything that

resembles superficiality in religion is fatal and ruinous in the extreme. And yet in this work of personal salvation, where we need the utmost thoroughness and reality, is where the great majority are flattering their souls that a shallow and ordinary work is sufficient. Instead of seeking how well we can be prepared for eternity, how holy can I be, how much of the love of God can I possess and manifest, the secret whisper of many hearts is, How little may I lean on for safety? Untold thousands have "healed their hurt slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there was no peace" (Jer. 8:11). We sometimes hear the expression, "If I can just barely get into heaven, I shall be satisfied." But such an expression reveals something terribly sad in the heart. It shows unbelief in the promises; it shows a lack of earnestness and thoroughness, in other words, it manifests the presence of the carnal mind. All such half-hearted expressions from the mouth, spring from a half-heartedness within. One cause for so much superficiality in religion comes from regarding the mere external actions of life more than the inward state of the heart. In the Word of God we find that all conduct and action is traced back to the state of the heart, and reduced to its true character. Every act is measured by the character of the fountain far

more than the outward appearance of the act. True religion has, as vehicles, such things as doctrines, the church, the ministry, ordinances, duties, vows, but all these put together do not make religion, that is something that is a life, a warm, real, conscious life in the soul, it is behind action and produces it; it is superior to duty, for it imposes duty, and, larger than ordinances, for it creates them.

Human beings look only at the external. They are disposed to think that there is no sin except in the outward act, overlooking the fact of the "body of sin" in the soul; they also look upon goodness merely in the outward act, consisting of certain church duties and not in the conscious, thorough loving of God and loving our neighbor. This is why there are so many Catholics, high churchmen, ecclesiastical zealots, formalists and moralists in the world who have no salvation.

Another reason for superficial religion is in not viewing it in its spiritual and immortal nature, but looking at it as a temporal and earthly advantage. Failing to look at salvation in its great spiritual and eternal nature, produces an infinite amount of vacillation and inconstancy in pursuing it. It is true that the life of Christ in the heart, has its incalculable advantages in this life. There is not a single

good thing or blessing or advantage connected with the body, the intellect, the domestic life, civil government, business, commerce, education, science, discovery, or any form of earthly well-being, which is not purified, elevated, strengthened and adorned by the life of Christ in the soul. These are legitimate effects of salvation, but Christ did not institute His religion for the purpose of producing these temporal advantages. The true sphere of religion is in the spiritual nature and its true end is eternal well being. Time is too short and earth is too narrow for the religion of Jesus to fully reveal itself. It scatters innumerable blessings in its flight through time, but its true destiny is eternal communion with God; and to judge of it by a few temporal and physical things is to utterly misunderstand it.

So many half-hearted seekers after God, expect religion to bring them ease, comfort, wealth, friends, honor, office or some other emolument from a temporal standpoint; and if it fails they peevishly doubt its true power. This is why so few ministers and Christian people can enter full sanctification; they cannot relinquish the preferment, the friendships, the temporal advantages, which they suppose belong to religion. Could they see the salvation of God in its purely spiritual and eternal nature,

they would gladly count all things loss for its excellency.

A miniature rainbow may be found in a dew drop, but what is that compared to the full sized flowery arch that spans the heavens? In like manner, religion will show its benefits in the dew drop blessings of time, but to see and enjoy it in its highest state it must be seen in the magnificent form of eternity.

It is a singular fact that the more we look into the depths of eternity, the more we will be led to look into the depths of ourselves.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ENVY.

ONE of the most dangerous forms of inward depravity is envy. It is a form of sin which the world looks upon with great leniency, which fashionable people in society look upon as half a virtue, and which many professing Christians regard as a very ordinary defect. But according to the Word of God, it is the seed bed of unlimited misery and crime. Envy as an evil affection in the heart has two parts to it, consisting of hatred to others, because of their superiority in excellence, station or advantage, and at the same time, a certain degree of vexatious anger because of the inferiority of its possessor. Envy acts as a terrible cancer in the heart; it destroys the soul's own happiness; it prevents its owner from loving his neighbor; from enjoying the prosperity of others; it prevents him from enjoying his own blessing; it puts sourness into every blessing; throws gloom into the sunshine; and turns the soul ultimately into an engine of malice. It is in this sense the Bible declares that "Envy slayeth

the silly one," and that "envy is the rottenness of the bones." Envy is manifested against those of superior amiability, as was the case against Joseph by his brethren. It is said that Joseph's brethren "envied him" and "through envy sold him." They recognized in him a loveliness of disposition, a loftiness of aim, a purity of motive, a winsomeness of character which captivated the father's heart, and signalized him so far above themselves that they hated him for his very excellences, called him nicknames, caricatured his most unselfish expressions. Had their hearts been thoroughly pure, so as to "rejoice with them that do rejoice," the very reasons for their envy would have been reasons for their love and appreciation. Another instance of envy is that against the success of Moses as a great leader and commander. We are told that they "envied Moses also within the camp."

And this mean spirit was not from the lowest ranks of the people, but among the high church officials and his own near relatives. Their envy could not brook any superior. His extraordinary abilities; his constant access to God; his quick and far-seeing insight; his divinely inspired sway over the people was a constant torture to those who envied him. This example of envy has been repeated thousands

of times, not only among sinners, but in the highest ecclesiastical circles. There is a certain battle-scarred missionary from the Dark Continent, and when he appears among great bodies of Christians, a flutter of excitement passes over the assembly, and the multitudes instinctively rise to welcome him. But this very man, because of his unselfish triumphs for Jesus, is envied by some who are vexed at him because of the very things that make him good and great and beloved. Daniel was envied because of his superior talent. Paul was envied by the Jews because of his success in making converts. Jesus was envied by the Scribes and Pharisees because of His mighty, spiritual power over the people. If anyone doubts the statement that envy is the secret spring of crime, let him look at the Word of God and history. The Bible inquires, "Who is able to stand before envy?" As if, like a great forest fire, it burned down everything before it. Paul speaks of certain persons as being "full of envy and murder." Notice how the Spirit puts murder as the fruit sprouting from the seed of envy. Again, he says, "Whereof cometh envy, strife, railings." And again, "Where envying is, there is confusion and every evil work." Again Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "I fear lest there be envyings, wraths."

Envy hunts for defects in those who are above it, it endeavors to shine by beclouding the splendor of others, and tossing the lustre of others down to its own darkness. It misconstrues the good in others to make itself seem good. It forms and industriously circulates slander against superiors in order to seem virtuous itself.

It was envy that slew Abel ; sold Joseph ; slandered Moses ; put Daniel in the lion's den ; crucified Jesus ; stoned Stephen ; persecuted Paul ; built the Inquisition ; mobbed Wesley ; and in ten thousand ways tried to deface the form of goodness, to throw malicious vitriol into the face of loveliness. It is peculiarly a Satanic trait. Every atom of this disposition must be purged out of us before we can be Bible Christians or enter heaven. Envy is the utter reversal of the spirit of brotherly love.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LEAKAGE OF LOVE.

LOVE is the very substance and marrow of moral perfection. Faith is the condition of forgiveness and cleansing;* and the removing of actual and indwelling sin is the condition of the fullness of love. Many seek only for partial holiness; they seek it merely as a cure for some besetting sin; others seek it as a boon for some sorrow; others seek it in a mere negative form of cleansing; but the true idea is, that the whole being shall be made complete in God's love.

There is a danger of the leakage of love out of the heart that many are not aware of. Love is like a flame or a volatile fluid; it is not like a rigid, fixed substance. It is ever in a fine, subtle motion, and needs constant feeding. A piece of wood is solid and stationary in its form, remaining the same year after year; but the soft quivering flame is very different. So you may have the clear, specific doctrine of sanctification fixed as an unchanging truth in your mind, and

yet the quivering flame of love in your heart is another thing; and persons who were once truly sanctified may go on holding the well-defined doctrine and testimony of holiness, while, unconsciously, the fragrance and warmth of holy love have leaked out of the heart. It is much easier to retain certain truths fixed in the reason, than to retain a fixedness in the affections. Our emotions glide away imperceptibly; our affections leak out of the soul unawares. It requires much diligence and the adding of heart fuel to keep a lowly, loving flame in the soul.

Occasionally you will find a person who has been sanctified, still holding the profession, and grasping the clear doctrine, but who has, from various causes, allowed the warm, loving spirit to leak out; and he is restive, impatient, and harsh under neglect, persecution and opposition.

Those things which are the sweetest are susceptible of being turned into the most sour; and perfect love, losing itself in the fermentation of spirit and turning into sour, is one of the harshest, bitterest things on earth.

As there is a physical law by which sweet juices can be kept from fermenting into sour, so there is a spiritual law to keep pure love from losing its love power, and turning into moral vinegar. When a soul is thoroughly sanctified, it is

wondrously illuminated. It sees the church, the obligations of the ministry, the duties of religion, and human character, under an intensity of light and solemnity of conviction, almost indescribable; and it will act and judge and speak according to this intensity of vision. Other believers, whose hearts are still partially veiled by the carnal reason, can have no conception of the intense light of the fully sanctified. Hence, that which seems harmless to the partially blind, may be monstrous and offensive to the fully illuminated.

Now it will take an immense amount of love to keep the gentleness and charity of the heart up equal to the sharp discernment of the mind.

Mr. Wesley often observed that great light upon religious matters, without great love, was dangerous.

If the flow of love in the heart is not kept up to the measure of conviction, then the sharply defined convictions will assume a harsh and unkind edge that will cut contrary to the mind of Jesus. We must keep the affections pure, and warm, and tender, at any cost.

CHAPTER XX.

THE INNER MAN.

THROUGHOUT the Word of God there are frequent allusions to the five senses of the soul. It no more attempts to prove the existence of these senses than to prove the senses of the body, but they are assumed as a matter of fact, and the Holy Spirit speaks of the existence of an "inner man" as being just as much a matter of reality as the outward physical man. It would fill a little volume to collect all the Scriptures in which the senses of the soul are mentioned. Perhaps none of them would be any stronger than the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Hebrews: "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." The marginal reading and correct rendering is, Strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by the habitual use of their senses (spiritual) can discern both good and evil. The idea of full age, or old age, is not in the

text at all, and was put in by the translators because of the old notion that nobody could be a perfect Christian except by long growth and old age, whereas the reference is to a being having all its senses clear, strong, complete, without any reference to whether he be old or young. A young believer, as well as an old one, may be so alive to God, and have all his spiritual senses so cleansed and filled with the Spirit, as to be able to discern spiritual things, and by the exercise of the sanctified soul senses, detect readily and intuitively, the facts in the moral and spiritual realm, whether they be good or evil. The soul of the sinner has all the senses, but they are locked in the dark sleep of sin, and he can no more see or hear or feel the things of God and the heavenly world, than an unborn man can perceive the sights and sounds and magnitudes of the material world.

In order for the soul to have the use of its spiritual senses, it must be born into a spiritual world, its whole being and faculties regenerated by the Holy Ghost. In this age of loose theology and the paring down of the supernatural in religion, the great miracle of the new faith needs to be emphasized with the infinite "*must*" which Jesus attached to it. When the soul is first converted it is, in reality, a spiritual infant, introduced into a spiritual world, and

under the dominion of laws, loves, longings, kinships and apprehensions, that are spiritual. And although it has all the senses and the graces belonging to the spiritual kingdom numerically, yet they are weak, limited, and often rendered dull and inoperative by remaining carnality. This is what the apostle declares concerning the Hebrew converts, when he says that they were "dull of hearing and could not take strong meat, and were inexperienced in the word of righteousness, when at the time they ought to have been teachers." He affirms the same concerning the converted Corinthians.

The vigor and perfection of the bodily senses (unless wounded by an outward force) depend on the purity and vigor of the blood; so the power and acuteness of the spiritual senses depend on the purity of the heart and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. A little infant can see, but he cannot discern shades of color, or distance; he can hear, but he cannot locate sounds; while the senses of touch, taste and smell are feeble. These facts are true of the spiritual babe; he cannot detect the shades of moral quality, he cannot measure accurately moral distances, he is slow to detect evil that hides itself behind apparent good; he does not readily discriminate the agency of Satan, nor has he an acute ear for the voice of God. The infancy of

a Christian does not depend upon years, for there are thousands of sad cases where old Christians blunder along with exceedingly dull apprehension of spiritual things. The inner spiritual man is in a kingdom governed by the Holy Ghost, and not the slow laws of materialism. There are analogies between the different kingdoms, but it is absurd to make these comparisons go on all fours. A man under the reign of animal life will reach his maturity one hundred times quicker than the big trees of California reach theirs, and why should not the inner spiritual man, under the direct agency of the Holy Ghost, reach his moral maturity a hundred times quicker than the outward physical man?

There are three great facts to spiritual life. First, divine life imparted to the soul. Secondly, the life purified from all internal hindrances. Third, the life elaborated and utilized in actual service.

First, the corn must be planted. Second, it must be purified from weeds and grass, and thirdly, utilized into flour and food. We have gold first in the quartz, then purified and turned into bullion, then minted into coin for service. In regeneration the gold of Christian life is imparted. In sanctification the flinty quartz of original depravity is removed, then under the

fullness and guidance of the Spirit the faculties and powers become currency in the kingdom of God to do service for him. It is amazing to what an extent the spiritual senses may be carried in their refinement and vigor of apprehension.

CHAPTER XXI.

SPIRITUAL DISCRIMINATION.

IT is a fundamental law in the constitution of the soul, that spiritual understanding and discrimination is directly connected with the condition of the heart. Corruption in the heart inevitably produces disorder and darkness in the mind; and purity of heart clarifies the intellect and imparts to it strong and acute perceptions. This truth is abundantly referred to in the Scriptures. "To the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." The pure in heart see God. "I will cure them, and will reveal the abundance of peace and truth." There are scores of similar statements in which knowledge, revelation, vision, follow as a consequence upon the purification of the heart. So many attempt to reverse this order and have the understanding first and the experience afterwards, but God's unchangeable rule is a work of grace in the heart first, and the understanding of it afterwards. It is always growth in grace first, and then knowledge. One of the marvel-

ous effects of full sanctification is the clearness and acuteness it imparts to the five senses of the inner man. To instance a few samples of discrimination under the full baptism of the Spirit:

1. The difference between things and beings. To such a soul the persons of the trinity, good angels, and evil spirits, are not merged in a tangled maze of indefinite things but they are perceived by the understanding with the same clearness they are spoken of in the Scriptures; and, on the other hand, the inanimate forces of nature are not idolized and enthroned as beings. It is a notorious fact that half-illuminated Christians, and unregenerate church members, have a tendency to reduce spiritual personalities to the order of mere things, and have, on the other hand, a tendency to exalt a mere law of nature, into doing the work of the Saviour. This is done when growth, which is a law of nature, is supposed to cleanse the heart, which is the exclusive work of a personal Saviour. The fully purified soul, though he be unlearned, will never make such a blunder in his moral perceptions. To such an one how real is the promise, "Thine eye shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land that is very far," which promise has direct reference to the spiritual perceptions in this life, for the preceding verses describe conditions and

experiences which can only be in this world.

2. It discriminates between temptation and sin. Such a soul may not always be able to define accurately the difference between the two, it may not have the gift of putting into language the clear-cut verities of the inner man, but there is an inward sense of feeling by which it finds out the difference between a suggestion to commit sin and the consent of the heart to do it. It finds out by a silent, inward teacher the difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil; that evil thoughts are such as originate in the heart or are willingly entertained there, but that a thought of evil is a suggestion to the mind which can be repelled. The one is of the nature of a burglar, while the other is an admitted lodger in the tenement.

3. The purified spiritual senses discriminate between things learned and things revealed. We learn things gradually, but the Holy Spirit reveals truth to our hearts instantaneously. The consciousness of adoption is revealed, not learned, and so the certainty of heart purity is revealed and not learned. We learn through our outer senses, and in connection with these the use of our mental faculties; thus we learn distance, magnitude, form, color, number, how to trace cause and effect, and the relation of things. But when spiritual things are revealed to us,

the Holy Ghost works upon our intuition, and knowledge so received is instantaneous. There are three kinds of knowledge, — instinctive, rational, and intuitive. Instinctive predominates mostly among the lower animals; rational, mostly among men, and intuitive, mostly among spiritual and heavenly beings, but man has all three of these forms of knowledge in himself. The intuitive form of spiritual knowledge is not contrary to reason, but is just as far above reason as reason is above the instincts of the lower animals. To find a list of items showing the difference between what we gradually learn and what is instantaneously revealed to us, we can look at a concordance under the words “learn” and “know.”

4. It is the office of the spiritual senses to discern quickly the soul's enemies. God has endowed all creatures with the mechanism of instinct, by which they can each readily detect their peculiar foes. A hen with a brood of chickens will detect the flight of a hawk in the sky quicker than any hunter. A divine detective gift, similar to this, is imparted to the purified soul by the Holy Spirit. There was some difference between the foes which the Jews had in the wilderness and in the land of promise. Their enemies in the wilderness were their kindred according to the flesh, descend-

ants of Esau and Ishmael, but their enemies in Canaan were of a foreign race. In like manner when believers are in their wilderness experience, their spiritual conflict has to do mainly with the carnal elements still remaining in them, but on entering the higher Canaan life, their welfare is more immediately with evil spirits, and the direct assaults of the personal Satan. This is the teaching of St. Paul where he says: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places." (Margin.) It is of immense advantage to the soul to recognize its foes, and to discriminate between them and the innocent frailties and infirmities, which are inseparable from our earthly stage of existence. This is what Paul means by saying those who are perfect have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. The activity and vigor of our spiritual senses depend on our union with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. What would the eye be worth unless it were united with the light? What would the ear be worth unless it could act in union with sound? In like manner what are all the marvelous senses of the soul worth until brought under the operation of the Holy Ghost, who alone can purify them, bring them into full normal action, and cause

them to recognize and enjoy a whole world of divine and heavenly things?

CHAPTER XXII.

INSTANTANEOUS PURIFICATION.

“JESUS put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” Matt. 8: 3.

The miracles of Jesus are photographs of the operations of His grace. Some of them are types of pardon, others of cleansing, and others of glorification. The miracle specified in the text in a peculiar manner sets forth heart purification. Leprosy is nowhere a type of actual sin, but always emblematic of original depravity. Its perfect likeness to the carnal mind can be seen in the following items: It is hereditary and not so much contagious: again, it does not manifest itself so much in infancy as in later years; again, the offspring of leprous parents will inevitably have the malady; again, there is no known cure for it in the world, but it has been cured by miraculous mercy; again, in every instance where it has been cured, it was wrought instantaneously. In all these items it

corresponds exactly with human depravity. The instantaneous cure mentioned in the text is worthy of special consideration, in connection with the operations of grace. Confounding the instantaneous and the gradual in Christian experience is the source of much theological nonsense, and of more objection to full salvation than all other things put together. In order to get a clear view of instantaneous heart cleansing, let us notice the following points :

1. It must not be confounded with the steps of entire consecration. Consecration is man's side of the work, which has various steps to it, and is gradual until the last item of it is reached. But purification is God's side of the work, and is wrought instantaneously. We work in time, in successive thoughts and feelings. Our faculties are so limited that they cannot all work at the same moment with equal intensity and concentration ; hence there must be a series of acts in our minds, thought following thought, feeling succeeding feeling. Thus we approach a state of entire yielding to God by approximate steps. There is an increasing of conviction of our need, and increasing fervency of desire, and we yield ourselves in an itemized manner until the last point of consecration is reached. But God is not so limited in the operations of His Spirit, He does not have to think in successive

thoughts. With Him, "one day is as a thousand years." We may be gradually approaching a telegraph office and gradually writing out our dispatch, but when the conditions are all met the electrical message goes instantaneously. In like manner, the gradual approaches to heart purity must not be confounded with the instantaneous cleansing of the Holy Spirit.

2. We must not confound heart cleansing with the process of natural law. Here is where many blunder, supposing that salvation is the out-working of some law. Salvation either in pardon or heart cleansing is never a process of law, but always a work of God, an act of the divine will, the result of an Almighty volition, that volition which is infinitely above law. In nature God works by an established order through agents and sub-agents which we call law. And in providence He uses manifold means and agents, but in saving a soul He goes above and beyond the laws of nature or the instruments of providence, and works directly on the subject; forgiving the sins of the penitent, and cleansing the heart of the perfectly consecrated by the action of His infinite will; speaking from His infinite self directly to the heart, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven," or "I will, be thou clean." Everywhere in the Scriptures we find salvation declared to be the

direct work of God, and never of any law or agent. Thus we read, "I will circumcise thy heart," "I will sprinkle clean water upon thee," "I will purge away thy dross," "My Father cleanseth it," "Unto Him that loved us and washed us," in fact, there is not a verse in the Bible where salvation is delegated to any angel, or saint, or Church, or ceremony, or law, or process, but always proceeding as an act of God. Men are so fond of magnifying nature and law that even in sermons and theological writings, in a thousand subtle ways, God has been dethroned, and some imaginary law or process or development, has been put in His place as performing the work of salvation; in every such instance salvation from sin is made gradual, whereas the action of the divine will is always instantaneous. We find no instance in Scripture where a divine act is spoken of as gradual.

3. All the Scripture emblems indicate that heart sanctification is instantaneous or occupies a very brief period. It is spoken of as a creation. "Create in me a clean heart." Creation is instantaneous. "He spake and it was done." It is spoken of as pouring out water, as washing, as circumcision, as purifying gold, as putting on clean robes, as crucifixion or making dead. Even the longest illustration used in Scripture does not include more than four or

five hours ; and most of them represent a work that takes place in a moment. But the old notion that prevails everywhere, that heart cleansing is a slow process, extending through months and years, is not even hinted in the Scriptures.

4. The act of heart cleansing must not be confounded with growth in grace. Growth and purification belong to two distinct realms of action. All growth belongs to the realm of nature and under the regimen of law ; but purification is a divine act. The growth of the Christian previous to sanctification does not purify his heart, and on the other hand, after his heart is thoroughly cleansed, the soil of his nature is but prepared for continuous, rapid and unlimited growth in all the graces of the Spirit. In all the Scripture instances and emblems of growth, it is nowhere identified with the divine act of heart cleansing. The growth of a stalk of corn is one thing, but its purity of freedom from disease is quite another. All the stale illustrations and platitudes about the growth of the oak, and the broadening of the river, and the accumulation of muscle in the blacksmith's arm, and similar metaphors, are not to the point of heart cleansing. Purification has reference to the purity and health of the oak and not to its size, to the transparency of the river and

not to its enlargement, to the healthfulness and cleanness of the blacksmith's arm, and not to the size of its brawn.

5. Instantaneous heart cleansing is eminently essential to our state of probation. The very fact that salvation can take place only in this life, and that we are liable to die at any moment, makes it essential that salvation, whether in the work of regeneration or sanctification, should be an instantaneous work. Growth in grace can take place in the future world, and is nowhere stated in Scripture as a condition of admission to heaven ; but the thought is repeated over and over again in many ways, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. When we consider the brevity of our opportunities, the uncertainty of life, even for a day, the absolute necessity of having a pure heart before death, we see the infinite wisdom in arranging for us an instantaneous cleansing, and also the great presumption in our putting it off or relegating it to a slow, gradual process. It is very strange that there is such a widespread and inveterate prejudice against instantaneous purification. But the very fact of such prejudice is an infallible proof of a fallen, perverted state of mind. If we saw the truth in cloudless apprehension, we would rejoice that God has, in boundless mercy, provided a sudden sanctification as an emergency against sudden death.

Those who hold to gradual sanctification do not bear testimony to its experience, but those who have found the experience uniformly declare in harmony with the Scripture that "immediately their leprosy departed from them."

CHAPTER XXIII.

HINDRANCES TO HOLINESS.

HOLINESS is the most essential thing in the universe to a moral creature. Holiness is not an action, but a state of being which lies behind the action. Holiness is a state of purity, of simplicity, of unmixedness with foreign elements. All sin is a foreign element to pure, simple human nature. It is to the moral nature what a fever is to the blood. If purity—that is, unmixedness—is essential to having good water, good air, good bread, good health, good soil for growth of crops, it is infinitely more essential to the soul. Holiness of heart is more essential to the well-being and destiny of the soul than knowledge, or power, or great talents. A holy nature will wonderfully utilize a small amount of knowledge, power, or wealth; but, on the other hand, the principle of sin in the soul will pervert and squander a vast amount of learning or riches, or opportunity. Whatever hinders the attainment of complete moral purity blocks the train,

strangles the life, and forfeits the true end of our being.

Perhaps the first great hindrance to holiness is a failure to apprehend its necessity. So many locate all goodness in the activities of life, and fail to discern the true state of being. So many think there is no sin except in the act, and not seeing that all inherent darkness, perversity, crookedness or impurity embedded in the nature itself is of the quality of sin, do not realize the necessity of being purified in the very substance of the inner nature.

It is comparatively easy to lead Christian people to appropriate Jesus as a sanctifier when they once fully realize the absolute need of cleansing. Hence one of the most successful methods of preaching holiness is to analyze the heart, to delineate the features of the native inner man, to show his characteristics, his pedigree, his behavior, his moral complexion, not only as he acts in the sinner but also as he acts in a restrained and subtle way in the believer. If such a portrayal is made in a wise and scriptural manner, every honest and truly converted soul will see more or less his need of a deeper work of grace, and, at the same time, his conscience and judgment will side with the truth, though the carnal elements in him may rebel.

Another hindrance to attaining heart purity

is the lack of being clear in justification. Sanctification begins in justification, and if we are not clearly pardoned we are below the point where holiness begins. To say that the people who are fully cleansed have just been restored from backsliding, is not only a slander on the work of God, but reveals great ignorance concerning the doctrine of Scripture and the deep facts of the soul. Persons who most intensely hate inward sin, and most fervently desire the whole mind of Christ, are those who are in the clearest light of justification. A backslidden state dulls the apprehension respecting the need of holiness; it veils the pure nature of Christ from the understanding; it blunts the inward sensibilities to the touch of divine truth; it opens the mind to the reception of all sorts of heresies respecting divine things.

Another hindrance to holiness is viewing it in an unscriptural light, and holding unscriptural views respecting it. Among such unscriptural views is that of being purified from original sin at the same time we are pardoned from actual sin, and confounding the two. Also the error that our sanctification is located in the person of Christ, instead of being imparted to our nature by the Holy Spirit. Also that of confounding the cleansing of the soul with growth in grace, and also the theory

that inward sin is only to be repressed and not purged out of our being. The persistent holding of any one of these unscriptural views will effectually prevent the soul from entering into that rest of heart of which Canaan is a type.

There is a notion afloat among the churches that people can believe most anything respecting salvation, that they can hold several views about grace, or no definite view at all, and yet in some way blunder into deep religious experience. But the Holy Ghost never works along lines of error. It is true, thousands are saved and fully cleansed who do not understand the theology of it, but they do always apprehend the cardinal facts in the case.

There are many other hindrances, such as an unwillingness to get light on the subject, a prejudice against the Scripture terms, stumbling over other people, being frightened at a stray fanatic, an unwillingness to give up self at some point. But whatever the hindrance may be, it must give way before we can enter the paradise of God. If we as God's children will keep our eyes on the main facts in the case, our need and Christ's supply, if we have a teachable and obedient heart, God will find many ways to break down barriers, to send us help from unexpected quarters, and make the seemingly impossible melt away to an easy and simple thing.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE THREEFOLD EVIDENCE IN GRACE.

THE Apostle Peter, in calling our attention to the certainties of experimental salvation, mentions three forms or three degrees of certainty. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His majesty. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. 1: 16-19.

In analyzing these verses we see the contrast between fables and revealed religion. Fables exist only in imagination based on tradition,

but Christian salvation exists in experience, springing from divine revelation. The next item of analysis is that the certainties of this salvation touch the whole threefold nature of man, body, soul and spirit. It would be interesting to enumerate how frequently the idea of the trinity comes out in religious life. Three things constitute religious life — the doctrine, the experience, the outward practice. There are three elements in divine guidance — the revealed Word, the direct conviction of the Spirit, and the indications of Providence.

The three evidences mentioned in this passage by Peter are the testimony of the senses, the inspired Word, and the direct assurance of the Spirit. The first in order here is the testimony of the senses. We were "eye witnesses of His majesty," a "voice from the excellent glory," and "this voice we heard." Seeing and hearing are the primary sources of acquired knowledge.

There are two hemispheres of knowledge; first, the hemisphere of what we learn through our senses; secondly, the hemisphere of knowledge revealed intuitively by the Spirit. In the order of nature the knowledge through the senses comes first. Many people think if they could only see and hear the historical facts of the New Testament repeated, they could readily

believe. But the wisdom of God has so arranged it that these facts are virtually repeated to each generation. There are yet transfigurations, the casting out of demons, Pauline conversions, and similar phenomena of grace which appeal to our eyes and ears, if we are willing to turn aside and see the sight. Have we not seen the wretched drunkard turned into a neat and earnest saint? Have we not seen the blurred face of sorrow or the gloomy face of despair made radiant with joy? Have we not heard the voice of blasphemy turned into a voice of prayer and praise, or the voice of complaining turned into that of thanksgiving? If we have not heard or seen, it is because we have not gone to the spiritual mountains or the gracious valleys where such things are enacted. The voice of praise that breaks from a saved soul is like the prolongation of that voice which Peter heard in the holy mount. The luster that beams from every saintly countenance is the outshining of a part of that uncreated light which glistened through the raiment of Jesus at the transfiguration. They are effects from the same great cause referred to by Peter in the text.

When we sit on the seashore and see the whitecapped rollers coming in, and hear their melodious dashing on the sand, we know that

the cause which produces these sights and sounds is far off on the great deep ; and that far out on the sea, beyond our sight, these breakers were set in motion. In like manner, far across on the sea of time, the living historical Jesus, who was visible and audible to the people of that generation, has by the perpetuity of His Word and Spirit so wrought on human souls, that the waves of grace He has set in motion still manifest themselves to our eyes and ears.

The next form of evidence is that of the inspired written Word, which the apostle declares is stronger than the testimony of the senses. "We also have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." The natural man thinks that the testimony of the senses is the highest possible ; but, as in many other instances, that which is the highest in nature is the lowest in grace. It is possible for our senses to deceive us, and very many instances might be cited to prove this, such as color blindness, double or triple vision, where persons see objects multiplied ; also where disease in the auditory nerve reports sounds to the brain which do not occur in the vibrations in the air. The Word of God is absolutely free from such imperfections.

It is more sure than the senses, because so

fitted by infinite wisdom to the mental and moral mechanism of the soul, that the very announcement of Scripture truth to the human mind, in any age of the world, whether among civilized or savage men, will carry conviction to the heart. No human being has ever lived whose soul would not respond to the truth of God's Word, unless it has first been tutored to unbelief, or morally stupefied by satanic opiates. You may select any congregation from the millions of earth, whether cultured or barbarous, and a simple announcement to them in their own language, of the ten commandments, the sermon on the mount, and the means of salvation through Jesus, if such congregation had not been tampered with by false teaching, their unbiased hearts and judgments would feel the truthfulness of the Word of God. The Word of God properly addressed to a human heart, carries its own evidence as really as a lamp, and finds a faculty in the soul that must respond to it as really as the organ of the eye responds to the light. Just as the Creator has fitted each bone to its appropriate socket, or the waves of the air to the drum of the ear, so He has fitted the truth of Scripture to the reason and conscience of man ; and as the inner faculties of the soul are more authoritative than the senses of the body, so the Word of God is more

sure to the inner man (if he is in harmony with it), than the testimony of miracles to the outward man.

The third and highest degree of evidence is that of the Holy Spirit working directly on interior consciousness. This form of evidence is indicated by the apostle in the words, "Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise, in your hearts." The words "dawn" and "arise" are both in the aorist tense, and indicate two distinct, instantaneous events. The life of the Holy Ghost in the soul is emphatically the daylight of divine life in man. But inspiration is accurate enough to indicate the *pre* and *post* pentacost life, by the difference between the light of day and the full-orbed manifestation of the day-star. The Word of God shines in a "dark place," or, more emphatically, a "filthy place," until the day dawn; that is, Scripture truth shows us our sins and continues to manifest the filthiness of the heart, until the Holy Spirit regenerates us and scatters the gloom of guilt by an inward attestation of God's favor. We sometimes hear it said that the moon shines as bright as day; and we also hear it said of some moral but unregenerate persons, that they are about as good as Christians. But there is almost an infinite difference between the one and the other. A thousand moons shining at their full would not

equal the light of day, though the sun were concealed behind a cloud or mountain; and all the morality — be they ever so moral — of a million unregenerate souls would not equal the life of the humblest believer truly born of God. The difference is not that of quantity, but quality. The highest morality apart from the new birth is like moonlight, borrowed and reflected from a cold, dead nature; but the inward life of the Holy Ghost, like the light of day, issues directly from its warm, living fountain. Religious certainty has not reached its climax until the personal Jesus, the day-star, has been unveiled in cloudless manifestation, as the full and perfect Saviour in the heart. And how true to experience are the words in the passage, that the Word of God will continue to shine and disclose the impurity of our nature, not only until we are regenerated, but until a fully manifested Christ purges us, and reveals His ineffable personality in our purified hearts.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE THREE MANIFESTATIONS OF JESUS.

IN the third chapter of the first Epistle of John we have presented to us three manifestations of Jesus, each one of which is directly connected with our salvation and glorification. In verse three, "When He shall appear we shall be like Him." In verse five, "He was manifested to take away our sins." In verse eight, "The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." Each step in the elevation of man is directly connected with some revelation or manifestation of the Lord Jesus as the direct cause. It would be an interesting study, sufficient for a volume, to trace out in history all the moral upliftings of the race, and find the connecting link between such upliftings and some revelation of the Lord Jesus.

Let us notice these three manifestations as they occur in the history of experience.

1. "He was manifested to take away our sins." Here are several suggestions. One is, the sins

are emphatically ours. The law is broken by our wills, our choice, our consent; the evil dispositions are indulged in by our hearts; our faculties and powers have been the instruments of transgression. They are not Satan's sins, and if they were necessitated, they would be God's and not ours. Another suggestion is the divorcement of us, ourselves, from our sins, which, to be Scripturally understood, does not imply that the act of sin is annihilated, or that an event of sin can be non-evented, for what is done as an act can never be undone, but that the guilt and offensiveness of our sinful acts are removed from us. So that while the act of sin does not cease to be an act, yet the quality of the act is taken away, the color, the odor, the *morale*, is removed from the actor. Another suggestion is that this taking away of the quality of action from the actor is by the manifestation of Jesus. He was manifested on the cross historically to the world, to bear the death penalty attached to committing sin, but in addition to that He must also be manifested as our personal Saviour and sin-bearer by the Holy Spirit to the eye of faith. Here is one of the deepest and most scientific truths in salvation, namely, that the quality of sinful actions can never be removed from the actor until Jesus is disclosed to that soul as its sin-bearer, and when

such disclosure is made, and the soul truly apprehends Jesus by saving faith, instantly all the moral turpitude of its thousands of sinful acts vanishes away, and while the act remains as an unchangeable event, yet the essence of the act is gone, its color has been, as it were, bleached out. A beautiful illustration of this is given in the Scripture where God says, "I have blotted out thy transgressions as a thick cloud." Many a time on summer mornings you may notice a thick cloud in the sky, but when the sun ascends the heavens, and is manifested in direct heat upon the cloud, it will rise to a higher altitude and be dissipated into viewless vapor, so that no telescope could find a part of it. Now, the atoms composing the cloud have not been annihilated, but the form, the color, the specific gravity, the motion, the quality of the cloud has been so wrought on by the manifested heat of the sun as to be taken away, while the atoms still remain. This scientific fact is equally true in the justification of the soul. Our actual sins form a cloud. But the word "sins" does not refer to the act itself, but to the moral quality of the act, so that when the bad moral quality of our actions are removed, it is emphatically true that our sins are taken away.

2. "He was manifested to destroy the work of the devil." In a great variety of ways the

Bible sets forth the difference between actual and original sin. In this chapter this distinction is clear, concise and philosophical. Actual sin is traced to the sinner, original sin is traced to Satan. The greatest work of Satan was to corrupt the human heart, and the carnal mind is emphatically a result of his work. When believers are earnestly seeking heart purity, they are distinctly conscious of a defection of nature, a corruption within which they clearly distinguish as not being of their own choice or work. They are conscious, in the language of Scripture, that "an enemy hath done this." Superficial or backslidden Christians often speak slightly of true believers groaning after heart purity, but it is because they have never gone deep enough into spiritual things to find the strata of inherent human nature or the mining processes of the Holy Ghost. Every Christian who has gone through with perfect inward crucifixion knows that we can be conscious of having every Christian grace, and, at the same time, conscious of an inherent perversity, which is the opposite of every grace. We feel it and hate it. We know it is in us but not of us, that it is a foreign element to our true normal human nature. Now the question is how this inward corruption can be destroyed. So many try growth, development, repression, and any

and every subterfuge except the remedy mentioned here, a special manifestation of Jesus as the direct cause of heart cleansing. But what can it mean to destroy the carnal mind? It will be easily understood if we remember that sin is not an entity, that it has no substance or existence apart from a moral creature, that it is of the nature of a pain, or a fever, or a dream, none of which can exist apart from some living being. Thoughtless persons sometimes ask, "Where does inbred sin go when cleansed away?" The sufficient answer is Where does a fever go, or a headache go, when the body is restored to normal health? Just as fever can exist only in the derangement of the blood, so the carnal mind exists only by some fundamental derangement of the moral heart, which is to the soul what blood is to the body. And when the earnest Christian, struggling for perfect heart rest, apprehends Jesus as the only and all sufficient and present Cleanser, the Holy Ghost will so manifest him as a Sanctifier, that the leprosy of inward sin instantly vanishes as darkness when a light enters a room.

3. "When He shall appear we shall be like Him." This is the final manifestation of Jesus in His capacity of Redeemer. According to the Scripture, redemption is not complete till the body is raised from the dead and soul and body

glorified in the beatific presence of the Lord. Though our sins are taken away, and though the carnal mind is destroyed, there are yet a multitude of infirmities, limitations, afflictions, which beset and load down more or less the saintliest persons. The pure in heart are conscious of these hindrances, and yet, at the same time, conscious that they are not sin in the Scripture sense of that word. There is a transcendent work, utterly beyond our thoughts, which is to pass like seraphic lightning over our whole being at the glorious appearing of our Saviour. We may conjecture a thousand blissful changes such a sight will produce in us, but it is all summed up in the words of the Holy Ghost: We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WALKING IN LOVE.

LOVE is the central, animating force in true religion. It is to the moral system what the sun is to the solar system, the warming, illuminating, moving power to every part. In the natural world every growing tree, flowing stream, breeze of wind, floating cloud, falling shower, opening bud, tossing wave is produced by the force of the sun. So in the spiritual realm every fervent prayer, act of charity, resistance to evil, gentle word, courageous act is a product of love. It is to the soul what blood is to the body. As the health and vigor of the body depend on the blood, so the health of the soul, the vigor of its righteousness, the bloom and color of its excellences depend on the quality and degree of love that pervades the spirit and prompts its movements. The term "walk" applies to all the movements of the spirit and life; it is the ever-going, never-ceasing locomotion of the moral and mental nature. We walk in our words, our desires, our tempers,

plans, purposes, prayers, sermons, opinions, business dealings, every unfolding of the spirit in an outward act, or an intention to act, constitutes a distinct step in the everlasting march of the soul on its journey through eternity. Footprints on the ocean shore may be erased by the next wave, but our souls are putting footprints into the passing hours which are indelibly preserved in our history.

To walk in love, to speak, to act, to purpose, with the love of God pervading all our movements, is the best and sublimest form of existence. To do this there must be a thorough abnegation of self-will, self-opinion and self-desire.

It is so easy for us to indulge in a spirit contrary to Christ's love under the guise of zeal or some other form of virtue. Let us apply walking in love to our preaching, teaching, exhortation, reproving. In all such deliverances we may be rigidly orthodox, severely truthful, forgetting that we break the truth the very moment we cease to hold the truth in love. How long it takes us to learn that "the letter killeth," that is, the exact, strict, doctrinal truth, when separated from the proper spirit which should go with it, becomes the instrument of death. Even the doctrine of holiness may be held and taught in such a spirit as to break the law of holiness. Without love the doctrines of

salvation may be presented in a ruinous way, and with love the doctrine of hell may be presented in such Scriptural unction as to save souls. Apply this walking in love to prayer. Are not a great many prayers worse than wasted because uttered in a sharp, condemnatory or peevish and ill spirit? Have we not heard prayers which sounded like judging others or reprimanding others, or addressed to some individual in the company more than to God?

Do we ever catch ourselves uttering a prayer for the gratification of self, or either for the commendation or the condemnation of some one present? Let us remember that no prayers ascend to heaven with prevailing effect except in the same proportion as they have the spirit of heaven in them. That which comes from heaven will return thither. This is just as true of prayers as of persons. It is the love force in our prayers that makes them telling with God or with men. If we pray thoughtfully, God will give us an inward light to detect any deviation from the spirit of love. It will often happen that we shall find ourselves about to utter some word or petition which is unwise or expresses a wrong sentiment, and before it escapes our lips the Spirit will lead us to utter something quite different, or else to so modify the tone of our voice and the manner of expres-

sion as to produce an effect just the opposite to what it would have been but for His gentle touch and illumination. To use either flattery or recrimination in our prayers may not be equally offensive to men, but it is equally offensive to God; and in either case poisons our petitions. The thoughtfulness which is requisite in prayer is not that of intense intellectuality, but that tranquil kind of thoughtfulness which watches the outgoings of our heart to see that they are in harmony with the Scripture and pleasing to God. If this form of walking in love were observed, how many kinds of prayers it would weed out from religious services, and even from some holiness conventions and meetings. Apply this walking in love to our feelings toward and opinions of others. What my heart feels toward another, or what my opinion of him is, implies the activity of my moral nature and is a form of walking. Prejudice is an opinion formed beforehand, or without knowing the facts in the case, and if my mind walks in love, it will prevent prejudice, for love forms its estimate on the basis of knowledge. In our views of other people, other churches, other localities of country, other races, other forms of living, other kinds of meetings, other sorts of revival than those of our own, if our judgments were formed under the guidance of love, how tolerant they would be, how free from rash denunciation.

In that case our opinions would coincide with the Word of God. Apply this walking in love to matters of business, which would not only imply that we transacted our affairs honestly, but that the honesty and fair dealing were the outflow of a loving heart which, from its loving nature, preferred and delighted in fair dealing. We hear it said, that "honesty is the best policy," but the person that is honest for that reason is, at heart, a thief, for the same grounds he would steal, providing stealing was the best policy. To walk in love in buying and selling, in borrowing and lending, in begging and giving, in hiring and being hired, in being masters or servants would constitute an ideal society, and if all will not accept of this rule we can each have the privilege of forming one that does it, and if we should be the only one it will be to us just the same as if all the world did. The Holy Spirit has chosen to feed us with such verses as the following: "We should be without blame before Him in love," "Being rooted and grounded in love," "Forbearing one another in love," "Speaking the truth in love," "The church edifying itself in love," "Being knit together in love," "Esteem them highly in love," "Walk in love," "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." When we look back over our lives, and see the times and places where

another disposition has governed our words and actions, they look like salt spots upon which no lovely fruit has grown. We may depend upon it no form of religion will succeed except that which springs from the blessed author of religion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HEAVENLY TREASURE.

“**B**UT lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also.” Matt. 6: 20–21.

“Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.” Heb. 10: 34.

The central truth in these verses is the statement, “where the treasure is there will the heart be.” The author of the human heart alone knows all its boundless and mysterious workings. He does not say where the heart is there will the treasure be, but where the treasure is there will the heart be. The heart will follow its treasure as infallibly as the mother will follow her offspring, or rivers flow toward the sea. Let the treasure consist of anything, be located in any clime, or be ever so worthless to others, if it be really regarded as a treasure, thither will the heart fly and hover around it.

In saving and restoring man to the image of God, Jesus does not plan to destroy a single law or instinct of the soul, but to purge out of it every perversion of sin, so that with all its instincts purified and unimpaired it will act in harmony with the purpose of God. One of the earliest and strongest instincts of the heart is a certain definite attachment to our possessions. This attachment to possessions is not the result of education or a thoughtful estimate of values, but a powerful instinctive action of the mind. Among the first thoughts of childhood is this idea of possession, and when a toy is placed in an infant's hand he at once has the idea of ownership, and with that thought springs up an attachment for the treasure, manifested by his cries and loud expostulations on having it taken from him. His reason could not explain it, but he feels it as distinctly as a millionaire. It is also the dictate of reason, it forms a mighty stimulus to industry and inventions, it imparts an energy to society and prompts to economy, wisdom and care. Christ recognized this principle to be fundamental and right. But seeing the principle perverted by sin, and the heart thoroughly engrossed with fictitious treasures He commands that all His followers shall relinquish all passionate heart attachment for treasures which are imaginary, and have the

heart thoroughly set on true riches; and in doing so proves Himself an infinite Friend to the soul. This command to the natural man seems very hard, but under the baptism of the Spirit it can be fully obeyed. When the early Christians lost their earthly estates by confiscation, the apostle tells us, "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Let us notice some contrasts between earthly and heavenly treasures.

1st. Earthly treasure is only the instrument of pleasure, while treasure in heaven is the very essence and substance of pleasure itself. There is a vast difference between the instrument which secures a joy and joy itself — just as the mill which grinds the wheat is different from the bread. All the riches of earth, in whatever form they may exist, can only serve as a means to an end, and when riches are looked upon as an end, they prove to be apples of Sodom. And even as an instrument, wealth is often unavailing. There are times when all the abundance of gold cannot buy a drop of water, or a mouthful of bread, or avert calamity, or ease a pain; and while as an instrument it is capable of producing innumerable comforts and smoothing our passage through life in general, yet the richest often witness its inefficiency. But

heavenly treasure is not an instrument ; it is an everlasting fruition ; it enters into the very body and substance of true happiness. It is an estate of a moral and spiritual nature. The wealth of earth is a machine which may bring us a few drops of transient happiness, but wealth laid up in heaven forms an ocean of unalloyed bliss in which the soul may bathe, with the certainty of never losing it. Earthly riches make to themselves wings and fly away, but the gold tried in the fire is imperishable.

2d. Earthly treasure from its very nature can never fill or satisfy the mind. It excites the faculties and inflames the passions, but can never satisfy them. They start a train of desires and ambitions which they can never fulfill ; they start a feverish thirst for acquisition which they can never quench. A child may start a machine which it is unable to stop. Milton personifies Sin, the portress at the gates of hell, as unlocking those gates, but having no power to shut them again. So earthly riches open the gate of the desires but cannot shut or fill them. And this applies equally to those of great or little wealth. And then, the uncertainty of their duration, the anxiety of guarding them, agitates the heart, disturbs repose of mind, and turns what promised to be a blessing into a source of misery. On the other hand, treasures

laid up in heaven will fill every capacity they create. Such riches excite the heart without leaving the least agitation upon it; they kindle desires but also satisfy them; they draw the soul out in longings and thirstings for more and more, but always keep the possessor in tranquillity. And the consciousness that such wealth is unchangeable and immortal banishes all anxiety. A small fortune with the absolute certainty of its never being diminished is far more satisfactory than great riches held in uncertainty. So heavenly riches do not contract the soul or unduly excite it, while accompanied by the principle of eternal security.

3d. Earthly wealth used only for earthly purposes can never enter into union with the Spirit, but must always remain external to the soul; but when used for the glory of God it passes, as it were, into a heavenly state, it becomes identified with the immortal spirit, and incorporated with everlasting character. It is the apotheosis of wealth. True, the gold itself remains material, but being used in the divine will it represents holy character, accomplishes holy results, and is, in a certain sense, glorified. It is in this sense that Jesus says, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luke 16: 9.

That is, take earthly riches which when used sinfully become the idol mammon, but when used under the direction of the Holy Ghost in doing good to the bodies and souls of mankind, we make immortal friendships for ourselves, and when we fail on earth, these friends we have made, whether among the heathen or at home, and have been the means of saving them through our money, will welcome us at death into everlasting habitations. So that in a sense the eagle stamped on every dollar we give to God will be transformed into an angel to welcome us to the portals of bliss.

Riches when used only for the present life are like the clouds that shine brightly during the brief day of our earthly existence, but when the sun of life is set, they turn to cold lumps of darkness and fade into everlasting night; but when used for the glory of God, they resemble the vapors around the sun, which are always bright with an internal and intrinsic light.

4th. Earthly wealth is not really our own. Our possession of it is more of a fiction than a reality; it belonged to others, it will soon belong to others again. We borrow the garments of animals to clothe ourselves, we proudly deck our bodies with silk which has already served the silk-worm for a shroud, and will soon

serve us in the same capacity. How emphatic the language of the Holy Ghost, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." We make our advent in nakedness and poverty, we assume control of all earthly treasures for a brief period, we claim the earth and the sea, we contest for trifles, and then pass out leaving all behind us, except that character which we have formed while passing across this narrow stage of being. But the treasure which we have laid up in heaven, is, in a high and proper sense, our own. The industry that worked, the act of giving, the love that prompted the act, the prayer that accompanied the act, are emphatically our own. This species of wealth can never be transferred to another; it is a kind of wealth that was never borrowed and will never be relinquished. The increase of this wealth does not impoverish another. How sad to think that not only worldlings, but vast numbers of professed Christians are using this world in such a way as to lay up no good store for the time to come.

We can lay up treasure in heaven by observing three things.

1st. By giving the best we can. The best of time, of thought, of health, of influence, and by giving the best percentage we can of our earnings or our income.

2d. By giving everything in the best spirit. Cheerfully, gladly, without grumbling or grudging ; by giving regularly, religiously, rejoicingly ; by giving in the love of Jesus, for the love of our fellows, looking for more love as our greatest reward.

3d. By giving to the best ends, to save the souls of men ; by giving for immediate relief, instead of giving for long results in the ages to come ; by giving in such a way as to accomplish most directly and immediately the best results first to the souls and then to the bodies of mankind. What we give, we save. We are emigrating to a distant world and the treasure we send ahead of us will form our best estate.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MAKING FRIENDS WITH MAMMON.

SIN perverts every legitimate faculty of the soul. It also poisons and perverts every species of earthly treasure and activity. Just as divine grace can save and purify the worst of human beings, so grace can, through human beings, lift money from being a curse into making for us everlasting friendships in heaven. Many persons inquire what our Lord could mean by commanding us "to make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when we fail, these friends may receive us into everlasting habitations." Luke 16: 9.

Satan and Jesus are both bidding for the use of our money. Satan holds out to us earthly pleasure, fashion, fine raiment, luxurious ease, and transitory amusements; and money used for such purposes, and worse than wasted on tobacco and sinful indulgences, or miserly hoarded, will be turned into an infinite curse. Every dollar so wasted, the eagle stamped on the dollar, will turn into a fiend whose talons will

claw the heart in the future world. Jesus offers us the privilege of helping him save the world, of relieving the poor and needy, of investing in the spread of holiness, of putting our means into salvation agencies, and every dollar so used will be eternally saved in heaven ; and the eagle stamped on every such dollar will be turned into a bird of Paradise, and the Goddess of Liberty will be as an angel of love to welcome us to portals of bliss.

It is thus that money represents character. In itself a gross piece of materialism, yet by the use it is put to, it becomes the incarnation of moral quality. It is invested with the attributes of either sin or saintliness, industry or idleness, prayer or prodigality. The liberal use of money for the Lord is one of the great needs of Christian training. The selfishness and stinginess of professed Christians is absolutely appalling. There are thousands and thousands of men and women in the churches, with from twenty-five to one hundred thousand dollars, who do not give fifty dollars a year to God. There are even some rich preachers who are notorious beggars, but who seldom give a dollar. Is not such penuriousness just as great a crime in the sight of God as what is commonly termed gross immorality? The most appalling thing about stinginess is, that it seems so respectable ;

instead of being looked upon as a positive, disreputable sin, it is quietly winked at as a mere weakness.

In order to make friends out of money, it should be used as much as possible for direct results in soul saving. It seems to me this is always the teaching of Jesus. Instead of endowing great establishments, and piling up millions in some institution, to bless far off generations, if more money could be used in the immediate work of carrying on revivals, conducting soul-saving conventions, opening up missions, both abroad and for the non-church goers at home, God would be more glorified. How this thought will impress us, when we look at the great cathedrals in Europe, in which hundreds of millions of wealth is entombed, which can never have a resurrection. Enormous piles of grandeur in which only a debased or very shallow form of religion is taught. There is coming in the American churches the same craze to entomb great fortunes in cold stone, where neither God nor man will get more than a bare pittance out of it for direct soul saving. I know many will disagree with me, but it is just this popular drift of the mind which I affirm is contrary to Christ. Men that can be induced to put tens of thousands into some cold, formal monument, would not give a hundred dollars to

carry on a great revival where hundreds of souls could be saved.

The financial columbiads are loaded with greenbacks, and fired off at long range, to bless unborn generations ; when the same ammunition fired at short range, could mow down the enemies of the Lord, and capture multitudes for Jesus in the living present. Another way to make heavenly friendships out of the use of money is to administer on our own estates before we die. There seems a terrible blunder in the settling up of the estates of dead people. Why should Christian men and women, who have wealth, feel bound to leave it all to their children ? Why should not God come in for a share ? The Bible begins with, "In the beginning God," but the lives of most professed Christians read, "At the last God." How many fortunes, even among church members, are utterly squandered and wrecked. What quarrelling among heirs, what smashing of wills, what a carnival among tricky lawyers, to help such things along ! How many thousands, hardly earned and saved by industrious and plain Christians, are worse than squandered by godless children, or smoking and whisky-drinking sons-in-law. Oh ! how Christian men and women will wish in eternity they had settled up their own estates, and given God his portion before they

died. What we give to the Lord we save. The only treasure we can lay up in heaven, is what we send on ahead of us ; and this is the thought suggested by our Saviour. He does not represent us as welcoming our money to heaven, but on the other hand represents our money as having gone on ahead of us, and transformed into immortal friends, standing at the crystal port of light, to welcome us to everlasting habitations. God help us whether we are rich or poor, to give wisely, willingly, regularly, gladly, according to our several ability.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FAITH OF THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN.

THE most wonderful truths and thoughts are those which are wrought out in living experience. No definition of any trait of character can at all compare with a sublime exhibition of that trait in life. In the fifteenth chapter of Matthew there is recorded an instance of victorious faith which, though so unlike in outward detail to common experience, yet the inner secret principles involved in it enter the lives of all Christians.

“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshiped Him,

saying, Lord help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's beard and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Matt. 15: 21-28.

A thoughtful analysis of this incident will give us many suggestions concerning the spiritual life.

The first thought is the coming together of want and supply. "Jesus went," the "woman came." Jesus foreknew her need and her seeking faith. She had heard of Him and was eager to find Him. Here is an instance of a seeking Saviour and a seeking soul. Is it not true, as a rule, that people get what they seek? There is a tremendous meaning in the words, "He that seeketh findeth." Ten thousand incidents and evidences in nature, history and grace confirm it. From the ends of the earth, from the depths of eternity and space, want and supply come together. Prayer is the expression of want, when the want is overwhelming the prayer is prevailing. The spirit of Jesus moves toward a great crying want with more accuracy than air moves toward a vacuum.

Another suggestion is the discovery and honest confession of the malady. "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She did not cover up the malady with fictitious and Latinized names. She had enough discernment to trace the malady directly to the demon, and then she had the humility and transparency to confess the whole thing to Christ with all its mortifying reality. Here are two things that stand in the way of the salvation of millions. They do not trace their maladies to sin, and are not honest enough to make a perfect, unvarnished confession. We see here four great barriers her faith had to surmount, namely, divine silence, human coldness, caste and prejudice. If we look at these in detail, we find that they illustrate the vital issues in many lives to-day.

1. Her faith surmounted divine silence. In response to her cry, "He answered her not a word." How many thousands of souls have been balked at this point in their prayer and faith. Jesus moved on with His calm dignity as if deaf to her cry or insensible to her need. Has it not often been so with us? The heavens have seemed brass, the Lord seemed to be indifferent. God has spoken so many things in His Word and providence, all the earth and times seem filled with divine utterances, and yet in our particular case, and on the one vital point at

issue with us, there seems to be so little said. There is such an utter silence on the one point so vital to us. There seems no answer to the one dominant question of our hearts. This unanswered question is a great test of faith. To keep on praying and believing, though God calmly and unansweringly moves on, is where the faith of many break down.

She apprehended a benevolent, loving nature in Jesus in spite of the apparent indifference of His conduct. Have we a similar apprehension of God? If there be something upon which the written Word gives no special utterance, if providence gives no satisfactory answer, does our faith penetrate the mantle of silence and apprehend the nature of God, do we still believe in Him against all unpropitious seeming?

This principle of divine silence will form a test in every life, and in multiplied ways, and if we want to know the inexpressible joy of hearing His voice and having Him speak to us some special and particular word that will perfectly satisfy our personal need, our faith must endure the testing of His silence.

After all, the very silence of Jesus is a sort of an unwritten word, an unspoken truth, by which He teaches us how to pray and how to trust. If our hearts go out after Him, His very silence will draw us on in more urgent petition,

for as long as He is silent He does not refuse or repel. Had He spoken too soon the fullness of her petition would not have been uttered, and so He held his voice back that the depth and volume of her cry might be poured forth. God waits that we may utter all the fullness of our heart before Him, that over and over, in every possible form and feature, our need may be expressed. And thus oftentimes His not answering us a word becomes a magnet to draw us on to a longer and louder cry. Blessed are those who make the silence of God not a source of discouragement, but the basis of faith.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE FAITH OF THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN.

AFTER her faith had withstood the test of the divine silence :

2. The next barrier her faith met was the coldness of the human heart. His disciples came and besought Him, saying, "Send her away for she crieth after us." We are not to understand from these words that the disciples had any hate or ill-will, but their words indicated that her crying embarrassed them, that they had but little sympathy and could not enter into her distress or appreciate the fervor of her prayer. Her faith pushed its way persistently over their ecclesiastical fastidiousness, their false taste of propriety. Her conscious need was so desperate it burst its way through every barrier of etiquette, human opinion, false modesty, whimsical prudence, human criticism, and like a mighty torrent tore its way through banks of human coldness across the fences of social opinion, across the nice gardens of fastidious feeling, and did not stop until it

emptied itself in the great ocean heart of Jesus.

This must be so with every earnest seeker after God. Our faith must surmount the coldness, the lack of sympathy, the foolish notions of propriety, whether in our friends or in cold, stiff ecclesiastics.

It often happens that souls who are seeking God either for pardon or heart-purity are too eager for human sympathy. They seem to want a little human nursing, but oftentimes such human sympathy only hinders the work of thorough crucifixion and is an impediment to true faith.

When we see our malady in its depth and awfulness, and get a holy desperation for complete deliverance, we will not go hunting for the little plaster of human sympathy, nor be thwarted by any amount of innuendoes, or red tape, or ecclesiastical forms, but will push our way through to Jesus, right through mountains of dignitaries or forests of etiquette, or deserts of neglect. As in the case of this woman the very withdrawing of human sympathy and the tender regards of others only removes the props from the soul and accelerates its speed to Jesus.

3. The third barrier her faith had to surmount was that of caste. Jesus answered and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Here was the great

mountain of eastern caste put across the track of her faith.

The Jews were then the high caste, and she belonged not even to the high caste heathen, but to the lower caste of Syrians. Her faith had to climb over the difficulty of an ill-favored race, of race distinctions, of mixed heredity, with all the environments and unfortunate prejudices belonging to them.

Instead of being discouraged and turned back in her prayer, these very words of seeming repulsion only intensified her yearning cry. Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord help me."

How many thousands in all ages have been turned back in their faith by these very things involved in this principle of caste. Some have thought they were not of the elect, others have been discouraged by prejudices, by low and unfortunate birth, or by some terrible heredity, or by poor and unpropitious environments. True faith is born of deep want. If souls could only appreciate the desperateness of their disease, their cry after a complete remedy would bound over all the distinctions of race, caste, predestination, birth or training, and turn every seeming repulsion into the fuel of fervor and make every seeming discouragement only a cause of more earnest prayer.

4. The fourth barrier her faith surmounted was the mortification of being called a Gentile dog. Jesus answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs."

If she had any pride, any unbelief, any faintness of heart in seeking, it would have retreated into this last ditch of being called a dog. She had in her that true heart metal which Jesus had when He "despised the cross and endured the shame." Instead of being discouraged by this epithet of common degradation, her intense soul intuitively found in it an argument for the answer of her prayer. She said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

She would rather be a dog than to have her daughter possessed of a devil. Such humility of heart never fails to touch the heart of God.

What a contrast to thousands who would rather be possessed with all sorts of demons than to take the place or the epithet of a dog. This woman would be content with even a dog's share. One crumb from the master's table would satisfy her longing heart. The essence of her response unveiled boundless humility and the willingness to receive whatever God would give.

This is the secret to the answer to prayer, to lose all pride, to receive meekly any

epithet that God or men may apply to us, to stop dictating terms to the Lord, to yield up the form or the manner of blessing we shall receive, to receive gladly the will of God whether it comes to us in crumbs or loaves.

This is the spirit of victorious prayer. It was the bursting forth of such a faith that harmonized with the very spirit of Jesus that so pleased and honored God as to cause Jesus to say, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." He gave her the key to inexhaustible treasures. She could now have her own will when that will had passed over to God. It was safe to let her have her way when that way was in the perfect agreement with the spirit of Jesus.

In various forms and degrees our faith must surmount corresponding barriers and difficulties in hers. Blessed are they who, like her, turn all apparent discouragements into encouragements, who turn all rebuffs into spurs of pursuit, whose faith gathers strength at every difficulty, from the silence of God down to the mortification of being classed with dogs.

Her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

How speedily, how beautifully, how perfectly the power of God accomplishes results when everything in us is taken out of the way of the sweep of His love and power.

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